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THE HISTORY
OF
ROB ROY



THE HISTORY OF ROB ROY.



ROB ROY MACGREGOR.

From a Picture by J. B. MACDONALD, R.S.A., in the possession of
R. P. GREG, ESQ.

THE
HISTORY OF ROB ROY.

BY

A. H. MILLAR, F.S.A. SCOT.,

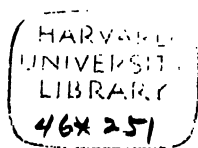
*Author of "Traditions and Stories of Scottish Castles," "The Story of Queen Mary,"
"Traditions and Stories of Scottish Historical Buildings," &c.*

" My wealth's a burly spear and brand,
And a right good shield of hides untann'd,
Which on my arm I buckle :
With these I plough, I reap, I sow,
With these I make the vintage flow,
And all around me truckle."

—*From the Greek of Hybrias of Crete.*

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P R E F A C E .

THE Author has to acknowledge with gratitude the frankness with which materials were placed at his disposal for the compilation of this "History of Rob Roy." Especially is he indebted to His Grace the Duke of Marlborough, for the use of the Plan of the Battle of Glenshiel, which is really a valuable contribution to Scottish History. His thanks are also due to General Sir James Edward Alexander, Kt.C.B., &c., Lieut.-General Rintoul, R. P. Grey, Esq., Geo. Seton, Esq., Advocate, and other gentlemen, for communications received from them.

DUNDEE, *March* 1883.

THE HISTORY OF ROB ROY.



“ Their glory is o’er,
For the clan is no more,
And the Sassenach sings on the hills of green Appin.”
—Hogg.



INTRODUCTION.

Until a comparatively recent date the Highlands of Scotland formed a region almost unknown, save to the adventurous tourist. The lovely lochs and mighty rivers, the heath-clad hills and spreading vales which lay north of the mystical Highland Line, were deemed all but inaccessible, and moorland and pasture were safe from the invading foot of Southern sportsman or sight-seer. Even the Lowlander looked with something of awe and dread upon the mist-enshrouded country whence came the bands of “thiggers and sorners” who lifted his cattle, broke his barns, and “spulzeit his guidis,” regardless of consequences, though the terror which surrounded the lawless northern tribes frequently prevented him from seeking redress by means of the law. As the lower portion of Scotland was alone suitable for cultivation, whilst the barren peaks of the north could afford but a scanty subsistence to the flocks and herds of the mountaineers, the latter soon came to regard the Lowlanders as their lawful prey; the wealth which they accumulated in their granaries and folds was the easily won reward of the most daring and unscrupulous. Thus the kingdom for many years was divided against itself, and,

though nominally under the command of one sovereign, was kept in a state of perpetual warfare, and suffered more severely from private feuds than from foreign invasion.

Nor need we wonder that this was so, when we remember the diversity of the two races which long ruled in Scotland. The Lowlanders, though derived from the Celtic tribes which inhabited the north of Ireland (the original *Scotia*), had, in the course of time, been rescued from their early barbarism by encountering the streams of civilisation which flowed into the country from England and from Germany ; and the humanising influence of agriculture, to which the fertility of the land allured them, soon eradicated the wandering instincts which they might have inherited. But those warlike races who had fled to the north, resisting every approach of civilisation, long retained the nomadic habits of their remote ancestors, and scorned the plough whilst they could live by the sword. The climatic influence of the wild and inarable wastes which formed their dwelling-places could exercise little power to win them to industry and forethought, and they thus retained that faith in the weapons of war and in personal prowess which the gradual development of Civil Law most surely destroys.

It is easy to imagine the results of these two different rules of conduct. Whilst commerce and industry thrived apace in the southern part of the kingdom, the intercourse of the inhabitants with other nations ultimately obliterated many of their national characteristics, and diverted their courage and energy into new channels. But the country which lay north of the Grampians afforded no such facilities for the progress of civilisation, and the feudal system was long maintained amongst races whose existence depended upon their valour and power to resist oppression with their own good right hands. Their mode of life led them to retain the customs, the language, and the literature of their forefathers, centuries after these had disappeared from the lowlands ; and the Scottish nation, up till but a very short time ago, presented the

strange phenomenon of two races boasting a common ancestry, yet widely different from each other in manners, in speech, and in feelings. The imaginary Highland Line for many years seemed to mark the boundary beyond which Civilisation was impotent, and progress—as we now understand it—almost unknown.

On the borderland betwixt these extremes, however, there were several clans of Highlanders who had been so far influenced by their contact with the southern inhabitants that they became recognised as middlemen between these two forms of existence. Their location naturally lay in Stirlingshire, the south of Perthshire, and the north of Dumbartonshire; and for a long period they formed the only means of communication available for those who sought to cross the Line in either direction. Their functions were twofold. Whilst protecting the Lowlanders from the raids of the northern clansmen, they equally resisted every attempt to carry law and order into the Highland territories. Like the Borderers, they claimed the right to arbitrate in all disputes between their clients; and asserted their claim with unflinching pertinacity. They became thus the make-weights in every serious contest betwixt north and south, and frequently had the power to turn the scale against those who denied or despised their authority. And it was not until the great Rebellions of 1715 and 1745 had thrown open the country to the influence of civilisation that these dauntless administrators of rude justice found their occupation gone, and finally settled down to agriculture and industry.

It is now our purpose to relate the story of one of the most famous of the chieftains who bore rule in this district—whose name has become a household word, and whose memory is inseparably linked with the scenery of the Highland Border—the bold outlaw, Rob Roy Macgregor.

The position which he occupied historically was a peculiar one. He stood upon the very verge of that period of revolt

which finally altered the condition of his country ; and as he was the bravest of the chiefs of his clan, so he was the last who could hold such an independent station. No authentic history of his career exists ; and though many works have been devoted to the recital of his exploits, they are too imaginative to afford a reasonable idea of his life and character. Indeed, few men of his time have been so seriously misrepresented. His biographers have either described him, on the one hand, as a patriotic leader of banditti, who consecrated his sword to the liberation of his country ; or, on the other, as a low-born cattle thief, whose virtues arose from his greed, and whose chief end was plunder. We think we shall be able to show that neither of these estimates is correct. The character of Rob Roy was as far removed from that of a romantic Calabrian brigand as it was from that of the half-breed horse-stealer of the Pampas. He was emphatically the outcome of his time—one whose like, for obvious reasons, we ne'er shall look upon again.

In relating his story we shall utilise many of the private letters and documents contained in the archives of the families of Argyll and Montrose which have not hitherto been brought to bear upon this subject, and expect thus to elucidate many of the darker incidents in his life which have hitherto seemed capable of an ambiguous interpretation. We shall endeavour, at the same time, to give such descriptions of the period in which he lived, the places where he abode, and the characters with whom he associated, as shall render the events in his career both intelligible and interesting.

CHAPTER I.

THE STORY OF THE CLAN GREGOR—THEIR ORIGIN.

“ Our ancestors never rested on a hill
While a foe remained in the land.
Their strength was like the soaring eagle's ;
They are praised in the works of bards.”—*Ossian*.

Rob Roy Macgregor was the descendant and representative of one of the oldest amongst the Highland clans. Though at the time of his birth his name was proscribed, and his clansmen denounced as rebels, he could claim an ancestry more purely Celtic than that of any other tribe in the North. Highland genealogies cannot always be implicitly trusted; and the statements of writers upon this subject are more frequently the results of imagination than of research; yet the traditions of the Clan Gregor are so well preserved, despite the dispersion of the race, that they are entitled to a degree of credence upon their internal evidence. And as it would be impossible for us to understand aright the relation which Rob Roy bore to his contemporaries without some knowledge of the vicissitudes through which his clan had passed before his time, it will be necessary to devote a little space to the story of the Clan Gregor. No more tragic tale of oppression and revolt has ever been framed by fancy than that which is contained in the simple annals of the race.

The Macgregors were, at one time, the main branch of the Siol Alpine—a tribe which included some of the most warlike septs in the Highlands, and from which there sprang the Grants, the Mackinnons, the Macnabs, the Macfies, the Macquarries, and the Macaulays. They claimed to be lineally descended from the Scoto-Irish kings, who ruled the lower

portions of Scotland, at one time, from the shores of the Clyde and the Forth to the base of the Grampians, and whose sceptre had been maintained, according to modern chroniclers, for nearly three hundred and fifty years. During this period the district of Pictavia was a separate province, ruled over by a Pictish King, whose capital was placed at Forteviot, in Perthshire, and the contests betwixt the Picts and Scots were frequent and bloody. At length this warfare seemed likely to be terminated by an alliance of the two nations through the marriage of Eocha IV.—the Achaius of the Latin annalists—with Urgusia, the daughter of Urguis, King of the Picts. When Alpin, the son of Eocha, came to the throne, he preferred his claim to the sceptre of Pictavia also ; but his pretensions were resisted, and—as Hector Boece relates in his somewhat mendacious history—the forces which he brought against Uven, King of the Picts, were totally defeated in a sanguinary conflict which took place near Dundee, and their unfortunate leader was beheaded on the spot where his standard had been raised. The place is still known as *Pitalpin*—the grave of Alpin—and credulous pilgrims drop a sympathetic tear over the supposed resting-place of a Scottish hero who lived and died during the fabulous period of history.

The death of Alpin took place in 836 A.D., and, though he had failed to accomplish the union of the Scots and Picts, this consummation was achieved by his son Kenneth. That monarch, not without difficulty, succeeded in establishing his claim to the united throne by his prowess as well as his descent, and styled himself “King of the Scots and Picts,” after his conquest of the ruler of Pictavia in 842. Though described originally as “Kenneth the Hardy,” he laid aside this title, and is known in history by the cognomen of “*Mac-Alpin*,” thus perpetuating the fame of his father. His two brothers also assumed the patronymic, and one of them—Griogar—is claimed as the immediate ancestor of the Mac-Gregors.

We are not prepared to support the pretensions of the clan to this ancient and royal descent, and as, in the nature of things, they have no documents to prove their claim, it is difficult to accept their assertions upon the faith of tradition merely. Yet there are several points in their history which corroborate to some extent the statements made by their genealogists. It is certain that for a long period the clan was known by the name of *Vich-Alpin*, the children of Alpin, and, founding upon this fact, some theorists have maintained that they were really descendants of King Kenneth Macalpin rather than of his younger brother. From time immemorial the motto of the Macgregors has been *S'rioghal mo Dhream*—My race is Royal—and this might safely have been asserted whether they claimed Alpin himself or either of his sons as their progenitor. Their location in early times seems to favour the idea of a royal descent. For a long period they held lands in Rannoch, not far removed from the capital of Pictavia, whilst an important branch of the family was settled, at a very remote date, in Glenorchay, a district in the midst of the province of Dalriada, the ancient kingdom of the Scots. Though these facts are not sufficiently powerful to suggest a theory of the royal descent of this race, they corroborate to some extent the notion which tradition persistently maintains, that the Macgregors were "sib to the throne."

The reader must bear in mind that the idea of a royal relationship in the pedigree of the clan is not founded upon any documentary evidence, and, as the data upon which it is erected requires belief in the Kingship of rulers whose very existence is doubted, there are many difficulties in the way of its acceptance. It is not until we reach the age of Malcolm Ceanmohr that we learn anything definite regarding the race. At this time the main branch of the family inhabited the district of Glenorchay, at the head of Loch Awe, and had settlements during the succeeding two hundred years (1057-1249) throughout all the fertile lands and pasturage betwixt Loch

Tay and Loch Etive. Appin, Rannoch, Glenstrae, and Glenorchay were all under their dominion; but the two latter places were especially denominated "The Macgregor's Country." Here they grew and flourished for a very long period, maintaining their position by their bravery and courage; feared by all who provoked them to vengeance, and respected by those who claimed their protection. But misfortune came upon them in a form which they could not overcome; and they fell from the proud station which they occupied through the machinations of those who coveted their portion. How this came about we shall briefly relate

CHAPTER II.

THE STORY OF THE CLAN GREGOR—THEIR TERRITORIES.

“Glen Orchay’s proud mountains, Coalchuirn and her towers,
Glenstrae and Glenlyon no longer are ours ;
We’re landless, landless, landless, Grigalach !—*Scott.*”

The scenery around the head of Loch Awe is not excelled in grandeur and picturesqueness by any other district in the Highlands of Scotland. The country which lies between the peaks of Ben Mohr and Ben Cruachain possesses all those varied elements of natural beauty and wildness that render northern scenery attractive. If approached from the south or eastward, the contrast which it presents to the appearance of the land passed through is very striking. The green vales and blooming banks of South Lanarkshire, the fertile valley of the Clyde, teeming with prolific stores of agricultural and of mineral wealth, the grain-crowned uplands of Renfrewshire, and the verdant carse and sloping meads of Stirlingshire, find no counterpart in these rugged regions.

From the time when the traveller leaves civilisation behind, and enters this charmed circle by way of Strath Fillan, until he reaches the very shores of the broad Atlantic, he moves through scenery which might easily belong to a different clime from that which he has traversed. The pathway winds around the base of Ben Mohr by the shores of Loch Dochart, whose glassy surface is frequently rendered turbulent by the fierce north wind which sweeps with fury between the surrounding mountain ranges. On the left the gigantic peak of Ben Mohr rises in bleak and barren majesty, betraying its volcanic origin by the dark brown rocks and treacherous precipices which scar its verdant outline. Its

summit, too often cloud-encompassed to maintain aught save the hardiest plants, is reared to an altitude of over three thousand eight hundred feet ; and down its sides, by innumerable water-worn channels, the rains of Summer and the snows of Winter make their way to the lochs and streams which lie at its base. Tradition records that in ancient times this bare cone, which now affords but a scanty subsistence to the wandering sheep who scale its unsicker heights, was almost covered with noble trees ; and that beneath the shade of larch and beech in the forest of Ben Mohr the Scottish Kings of very remote times did " hunt the dun deer down." This *may* have been ; but few traces are visible at the present day of such profuse vegetation. There are not many spots utterly bereft of verdure. Even the wildest glen

" Can show
Some touch of Nature's genial glow ;
On high Ben Mohr green mosses grow,
And heath-bells bud in deep Glencroe,
And copse on Cruachain-Ben."

But the deer forest, its inhabitants, and their enemies, have alike passed away, and left no evidence of their existence.

Ben Mohr forms the northern peak of a short mountain-range which terminates in Ben Lomond, and which divides the waters of Loch Katrine and its sister lakes from those of Loch Lomond. The road that runs betwixt Loch Dochart and Ben Mohr forms a kind of main artery from which some of the most famous glens in the Highlands branch off in all directions. Southward, and at right angles to the pathway, the picturesque ravine of Glenfalloch lies, between the mountains of Ben Mohr and Ben-laoigh, thus admitting of direct communication with the shores of Loch Lomond and the heart of the Highlands. The "Mountain of Fawns"—Ben-laoigh—is reckoned to be one of the most symmetrical of Highland hills, and in its secret recesses those streams take their rise which join together ultimately to form the main source of the

river Tay. The range of hills to the north of the road terminates Glen Lochy and Glen Lyon; and soon the traveller seems to be surrounded by an impenetrable maze of lofty peaks towering far above him, where

“ Rudely swell
Crag over crag, and fell o’er fell.”

As he follows the track the scene opens upon him with bewildering grandeur; and each successive turn of the road displays some new and unexpected feature. At a short distance from Tyndrum, and near the base of Ben-laoigh, is the famous pass of Dalriagh, where Robert the Bruce successfully withstood the Lord of Lorn, though he left behind him the “brooch of burning gold,” which has attained historic celebrity.

Far northwards from Tyndrum the majestic peak of Ben-doirean may be seen rising from the borders of the Lake of Tallo, and dividing the Muir of Rannoch from the Western Highlands. The lovely little loch which lies at its base has its outlet by the Orchay, whose waters flow down the glen that bears its name, until they mingle with the flood of Loch Awe. Parallel with Glenorchay, and divided from it by a chain of hills which run from Loch Tallo to Loch Awe, is the darksome ravine of Glenstrae, forming a gigantic water-course for the streamlet of the Strae, as it carries the drainage of the mountains towards Loch Awe. The range which keeps these rivers apart throughout their course terminates abruptly at some distance from the Loch in the peak of Ben-Mhic-Mhonaigh; and the Strae and the Orchay at length enter Loch Awe at the same point. Where the glens debouch a broad plateau skirts the base of the mountains, through which these two streams flow placidly until they are lost in the waters of the lake.

It would be difficult to find a spot which presents so many of the distinctive characteristics of Scottish Highland scenery as may be seen at one glance from the place we are describing. The spectator who stands on the railway bridge which

crosses the Strae at its point of junction with Loch Awe cannot turn his gaze in any direction without beholding a scene of surpassing grandeur. Towards the south the silvery loch expands its broad waters from shore to shore, and bears upon its bosom the fairy islets of Innishail, of Fraoch-eilean, and of Innis Chonnail. On the very margin of the water, and upon a point of land which probably was at one time an island, stand the ruins of the ancient Castle of Kilchurn—a stronghold of the Campbells of Lochow long ere their family had attained to its present dignity. Rising precipitously from the western shore, Ben Cruachain rears its majestic crest, dwarfing all the hills which surround it, and diminishing the appearance of the loch by its own superior magnitude. The richly-wooded shore which confronts it nowhere rivals Ben-Cruachain in altitude, but gradually rises in swelling uplands stretching towards the east, until these culminate in the peak of Ben-a-Chleibh, one of the shoulders of Ben-Laoigh. Eastward the road to Dunbarton and Stirling follows for some distance the course of the Orchay, passing through the village of Dalmally, and affording the wayfarer who pursues it a glimpse of the quaint Kirk of Glenorchay standing at the entrance to the deep defile. The level ground between the river and the base of the mountain range is now cultivated, but the stunted vegetation—the “brown heath and shaggy wood”—which clothes the inarable land, shows too plainly that “the high hills are a refuge for the wild goats, and the rocks for the conies.”

Before the traveller who takes up the position we have indicated there lie three vast glens, leading west, north, and east. The Loch finds its outlet by the river Awe to Loch Etive through the Pass of Brandir—one of the wildest glens in Scotland. The bold outline of Ben-Mhic-Mhonaidh marks the division between Glenstrae and Glenorceay, the first of which communicates with the mystic region of Glencoe, and the second with Glenlyon, Rannoch, and the centre of Perth-

shire. Thus by sweeping the horizon the spectator may see the chief elements which render Highland scenery attractive as well as grand, in the loch, the hills, the glens, and the rivers which lie within the range of his vision. It is not a sight to be looked upon without emotion. Tales of heroic deeds in the chivalrous days of old are linked with every portion of it. The ruined castle, the darksome pass, the silent river, and the many-caverned Ben have stories of wars, of oppression, and liberation to tell to him who intelligently regards them, and even the least sensitive soul must feel impressed with the utter loneliness of this scene of sterile grandeur. And one of the charms of Scottish scenery is found in the exhibition of the helplessness of man in his fierce conflict with Nature, which these barren hills so plainly show, proving that here he has discovered bounds which he cannot pass. Time flies on swift pinions, changing all that man can do, and hurrying the most ancient of his works into oblivion, but the "everlasting hills" remain as they were placed in ages too remote for our arithmetic, unaltered by the touch of the Destroyer.

" Amid this vast, tremendous solitude,
 Where nought is heard except the wild wind's sigh,
 Or savage raven's deep and hollow cry,
 With awful thought the spirit is imbued !
 Around—around for many a weary mile,
 The Alpine masses stretch, the heavy cloud
 Cleaves round their brows, concealing with its shroud
 Bleak, barren rocks, unthawed by Summer's smile.
 Nought but the desert mountains and lone sky
 Are here—birds sing not, and the wandering bee
 Searches for flowers in vain ; nor shrub nor tree,
 Nor human habitation greets the eye
 Of heart-struck pilgrim, while around him lie
 Silence and desolation, what is he !"

. The country which we have thus described is associated with the name of Macgregor when it first appears in credible history. How the clan gained possession of Glenorchay cannot now be ascertained ; but it is difficult to disprove the statement of one historian—that they were located there in

the time of Malcolm Ceanmohr. The theory which Mr Skene advances—and no historian of modern times can speak more authoritatively—is that the Macgregors were vassals of the Earl of Ross during the reign of Alexander II., and that he bestowed Glenorchay upon them out of the munificent grant of land which he received from that monarch. This would reduce the time of their occupancy by nearly two hundred years; but, as we are inclined to think that both notions are more imaginative than logical, we do not presume to pronounce upon them. Perhaps the most likely supposition is that the Clan Gregor, boasting their royal descent, quietly took possession of this land, which lay within the boundary of the ancient Dalriadic kings, whom they claimed as their ancestors, and maintained their rights at the point of the sword. The idea of feudal tenure did not commend itself readily to the Celtic mind. Devotion to the chief of a clan—the patriarchal system of government—absorbed the energies of the clansmen; and it was difficult for them to accept the theory that the chief whom they obeyed implicitly was himself the servitor of a king unallied to him by kinship. However, their duty was felt by them to be first of all due to their chief, and afterwards to their sovereign; and it took centuries of misfortune, of oppression, and of warfare to turn the Macgregors from this opinion.

Whencesoever obtained, Glenorchay soon became the headquarters of the clan. The facilities for communication both with the Highlands and Lowlands would be peculiarly favourable for them, since the land which they had chosen was unsuitable for the rearing of grain, and the flocks and herds to which it afforded pasturage required ready access to the Southern markets, that they might be disposed of to advantage. And for many years the Macgregors grew in numbers and influence, until they became a powerful and important clan. Their chief, at the time of Scotland's greatest need, took part with Bruce at Bannockburn, and aided that intrepid leader to

emancipate his country from the "chains and slavery" which enthralled them. Proceeding with the valiant Edward Bruce upon his unfortunate expedition to the north of Ireland, Macgregor was wounded at the disastrous battle of Dundalk (1318), in which conflict the bravest of the Scottish leaders fell, and he is known still in history as "the lame lord."

Many of the tales told as to the magnitude of the clan in these times require to be received with caution. It is gravely asserted by one historian, for instance, that, "in order to secure their inheritance in various quarters, a Lord Macgregor of the thirteenth century built the castles of Kilchurn on a peninsulated rock in Loch Awe, the castle of Finlarig at the west, and that of Balloch, since named Taymouth, at the east end of Loch Tay, together with the old castle in the lake of Lochdochart, and other strongholds." In justice to his memory, we should have been furnished with some more definite description of this industrious castle-builder than merely that his name was Macgregor, and that he lived some time during the thirteenth century. As a matter of fact, *all* the castles mentioned were seats of the Campbells, and were used by the latter family for the purpose of repressing and subduing the Macgregors.

Another marvellous story is related by the same author to account for the possession of Rannoch by this clan, which we shall lay before our readers, that they may see how history is manufactured by too credulous writers. We may premise that there is not the faintest shadow of evidence to support the idea.

"It chanced that the laird of Appin, whose name was Stewart, a branch of the primeval lords of Loch Awe, was travelling with his lady and their usual retinue of walking attendants, from the city of Perth to their property in Argyllshire. In passing through Rannoch they were interrupted and plundered of their baggage, and otherwise maltreated, by a certain tribe of the natives, now only known by the patrony-

mic of '*Glan-ic-Ian-bhui*'—the grandchildren of yellow John. In order to revenge this injury, Stewart collected a body of vassals, and marched with them to Rannoch. On his way, at Loch Tuille (Tallo), a small lake at the head of Glenorchay, near the present road through Glencoe, he was joined by a son of the chief of Macgregor, who resided in a castle on a small island in that lake. The devoted clan of '*ic-Ian-bhui*,' with their wives, their children, and their kindred, were cruelly put to the sword; and Stewart, in return for the services rendered him by Macgregor, placed him in the possessions of the exterminated race, where he remained, and was the founder of a new family, which afterwards became chief of the name."

It is useless to attempt a refutation of this fabulous narrative, but it may serve to show how difficult it is to obtain authentic information as to the early history even of so important a clan. Indeed, their greatness can only be inferred from a consideration of the elaborate methods taken to suppress them, and the story of their wrongs and degradation is more credible than the legends which record their power and magnitude. We do not reach sure ground, therefore, in their history, until we come to the period when their enemies took counsel against them, and it is because of this strange fact that their name has become a byword in Scotland, symbolical of trouble, of sorrow, and of bloodshed. The unravelling of the dark tale of those oppressions and crimes which drove them beyond the pale of law cannot fail to interest the descendants alike of themselves and their ancient foes.

CHAPTER III.

THE STORY OF THE CLAN GREGOR—THEIR FALL

“ But other days
And other fortunes came,—an evil power !
They bore against it cheerfully, and hoped
For better things ; but ruin came at last.”
—*L. E. Landon.*

Though claiming, as we have seen, a royal descent, and maintaining even to this day the memory of their former greatness by the heraldic motto of the clan, the Macgregors soon fell into disgrace as civilisation advanced in the Highlands ; and began a long and dangerous contest with the powers which opposed them, that finally ended in their own defeat. Their origin was more purely Celtic than that of some of the clans which surrounded them ; and the traditions of their ancestry led them to look upon these tribes as inferior by birth to them, and to exact from unwilling vassals the tributes due to royalty. For many years their position was upheld by the weaker clans who were unable to resist their demands ; and the vast extent of territory which they could command, and their own prolific increase, rendered them a terror to all around them. But the very power which they had gained proved the source of their downfall.

Fordun, the Chronicler of Scotland, writing of the times of David II., records that “ It is an old saying, that neither the wealthy nor the valiant, nor even the wise, can long flourish in Scotland, for envy obtaineth the mastery over them all.” And this statement was strangely verified in the case of the Clan Gregor. David II., an unworthy descendant of King

Robert the Bruce, first introduced to Scotland the method of governing by setting his subjects at variance with each other. The great principle "Divide and Rule" was interpreted by him in a peculiar fashion; and he fostered discontent, so that his own power as an arbitrator might be secured. To accomplish his purpose he withheld not himself from flagrant acts of injustice; and the Clan Gregor especially suffered at his hands. Doubtless they had proved faithful in extremity to King Robert; but their claims to a monarchy more ancient than his own had perhaps wrought upon his fears. He endeavoured, therefore, to limit them in every way. The Campbells had lately risen to eminence in the locality of Argyllshire, and as they were devoted to his service, David judged that he would both reward their obedience and limit the power of the Macgregors if he bestowed the lands of the latter upon the Campbells. As the family, "sprung from old O'Duibhne's race," had already settled on Loch Awe side, the King simply extended their possessions so as to include Glenorchay, which had been from time immemorial the property of the Macgregors, and to which no other clan had legal claim. They naturally resisted this attempt wilfully to deprive them of their birth-right, and as they did not recognise the "reign of law," they took up their swords to defend their rights. The powers which they could muster, however ample to keep the petty neighbouring tribes in order, were totally inadequate to resist them when enlisted under the banner of the Campbells; and ere long the rich pasture-lands which had supported them for generations, the flocks and herds which had been their wealth in the older patriarchal days, fell into the hands of their enemies, and they were themselves dispersed throughout the country. Glenorchay became the home of the stranger; and the place which once knew them knew them no more. And as the Campbells increased and spread their conquests through all the district, the Macgregors were compelled to retire before them, and leave the scenes they loved and the

wealth which they had accumulated to a tribe whose origin was recent compared with their own. They thus became "broken men," reft of the fruits of their industry, and forced to flee before the resistless march of "the majesty of the law."

We must not be understood as lamenting the conflict here alluded to. Every one who has studied the history of Scotland knows that without hardships such as we have spoken of no great reform can be introduced; and it was better that this clan should be sacrificed than that the lawless state of the Highlands should be maintained. But the circumstances of their dispossession should be borne in mind when their after deeds are considered; and their relationship to those who oppressed them and took away their goods whilst still unoffending subjects must have due weight when estimating their turpitude. This, however, is not the attitude usually adopted towards them by historians of Scotland. Even so temperate a writer as the late John Hill Burton hardly makes any allowance for the feelings of a clan thus forcibly cast forth from the homes of their fathers, and denounces the Macgregors as thieves and robbers, without troubling to inquire as to how they became so. But we think we are justified in saying that before the Campbells took possession of Glenorchay not one of the Highland clans was more devoted to the cause of the Bruce or less offensive to neighbouring tribes than the much-abused Clan Gregor. And when an unscrupulous enemy, armed with all the dread authority which law confers, lays hands upon the property which such a race had retained inviolate so long, there need be nothing else expected than "war to the knife." The end, doubtless, has proved beneficial to the nation; but the means by which the reform was accomplished will not bear strict investigation.

It is no great marvel that the Macgregors, thus made homeless and poor by the intervention of a King whose forefathers they had served faithfully and well, should resent what

would appear to them as the unlawful actions of him and his instruments. In defence of their hearths and homes, and for the recovery of their stolen property, they began a series of reprisals and raids, which brought them into violent opposition to the minor clans who had been their vassals; but all their efforts were in vain. The star of the Campbells was then in the ascendant, and nothing could resist or stay their increasing power. And as generation succeeded generation the children of the spoilers forgot whence their wealth was derived, and fought with the original possessors that they might keep still the ill-gotten gains of their fathers. To them the Macgregors would seem to be little else than lawless "thiggers and sorners," seeking what was not their own at the point of the sword. And thus the oppressed Clan Gregor became as Ishmaelites in the land where they had once ruled supremely, and saw their position enjoyed by those who had no claims upon them.

The method adopted by David II. of setting one clan against another in the manner explained, cannot be too severely reprehended. Founded on evident injustice, it was carried out with barbarous inhumanity; and though it bound the Campbells to him by the ties of interest, it rendered the powerful Clan Gregor the enemies of all his friends, and turned them loose in the midst of the country to wreak their vengeance upon his subjects. The influence of this suicidal policy may be traced in the history of Scotland for centuries afterwards; and the turbulent state of the Highlands both north and west during the succeeding five hundred years was largely owing to the indefensible system of oppression thus inaugurated by him, and of which the Macgregors were the first victims.

We need not dwell longer upon this subject, since it is merely our intention to shew how the evil moral reputation of the Macgregors originated. That they became latterly the "thiefs, sorners, and lawless limmers" which the old Scottish

statute-books denominate them may not be denied; and that many of them richly deserved the fate which overtook them is too true. But their case is materially altered when we remember the gratuitous wrongs inflicted upon them in these early years of their history, for it then becomes apparent that every man's hand was against them long ere they turned their hands against every man.

The struggle thus begun by the Campbells in the fourteenth century has been fancifully described as a contest between the Saxon and the Celtic races; but it was so only in a very limited sense. The rulers might be of Saxon origin, but the combatants themselves were purely Celtic; and the Bruce and Stewart Kings might have piped to arms in vain had they not aroused the covetousness, the jealousy, and, above all, the "land-greed" of rival chieftains. As the Campbells were led by men who were astute and politic by nature, and could estimate rightly the signs of the times, they soon vanquished the hardy Macgregors, who trusted more to their chivalry and native prowess. The story is an old one, but it is not without modern parallels, for even in our own times we are told that—

" Turkish force and Latin fraud
Would break your shield, however broad."

Driven from Glenorchay by the overwhelming forces led against them by the Campbells, the Macgregors were forced to retire northwards to the Muir of Rannoch, and to abandon the haunts associated with their name for many years. Unlike the pastures which they had been forced to resign, their new quarters afforded them but an imperfect sustenance; and, no longer able to remain together as a united clan, some of the families were compelled to retire still further north to Ross-shire, whence they have been supposed originally to have come. The head-quarters of the clan, however, long remained at Rannoch, where we find them placed early in the sixteenth century. Their new position was not favourable for

the pursuit of their former occupations, and they were practically cut off from direct communication with the districts of Lennox and Stirlingshire, which had formerly been open to them. For their own support, therefore, they were necessitated to adopt predatory habits, and to lay the enemies who had dispossessed them under contribution.

“ Pent in this fortress of the north,
Think’st thou we will not sally forth
To spoil the spoiler as we may,
And from the robber rend the prey ? ”

But this system has its dangers ; and as the idea of kingly government was gradually developed in Scotland, such conduct could not be endured. The Lowlanders whose cattle had been “ lifted ” joined with the Campbells in putting down the Macgregors ; and these unfortunate men were hunted through the land as though they had been beasts of prey. Even those of them who had turned their attention to agriculture were relentlessly pursued by their enemies, and prevented from gaining that hold upon the land and that share in civilisation which follow the use of the plough. The lands of Rannoch have been in the possession of the family of Menzies from a very early date, and the proprietors were long kept in a critical condition by the disputes of the clans which surrounded them. As the Macgregors came from the south, the Campbells closely followed them, and as the influence of the latter clan was rapidly increasing, the Lord of Menzies, for his own preservation, was bound to give them countenance. Hence we find that “ Duncane Campbell of Glenurchquha ” entered into a contract with Robert Menzies upon 21st October 1488, by which they mutually bound themselves to protect and support each other, in consideration of the letting of the lands of Auchinmoir to the former. The entrance of the Campbells at this time as tenants of the Lord of Rannoch into the territory occupied by the Macgregors was the signal for renewed hostilities between these two clans. The Campbells

could maintain communication with the head of their tribe at Loch Awe by way of Glenorchay, which was then their property; but the Macgregors were scattered in all directions, and unable to resist by physical force the encroachments of their ancient foes. The feuds which they maintained between themselves soon became most distressing to Sir Robert Menzies; and the discomfort which they caused is evidenced in a peculiar manner. In the year 1518 the lands of Rorow, belonging to the Laird of Rannoch, were let to their tenant on condition that he would "gif na takkis" to any "berand surname of Campbell, nor to the Chief of the Clan Gregor." The extent of the misery which their disputes had caused may be imagined when their exclusion from the possession of certain lands was made an express, and, we believe, unexampled, condition to entitle a neutral party to occupancy.

The Campbells of Glenorchay were not to be easily dispossessed of any property which they had once obtained; and it soon became evident that the resistance of the Clan Gregor to their encroachment was hopeless. To obviate the enmity of their powerful foes, several expedients were tried by them. In 1552 many of the families of the Clan Gregor renounced their own chief, and attached themselves to the Laird of Glenorchay, undertaking that they and their heirs would render to him all the dues of chieftainship, as though he had been related to them by blood, and not by adoption. Still further to effect a union betwixt them, a Laird of Macgregor wedded a daughter of Campbell of Glenorchay; but the hollow peace thus made was short-lived, for the chief, whilst on a hunting expedition in Braemar, was treacherously murdered by his implacable enemies. The two families thus laboured under the curse of a perpetual feud,

"Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,"

which threatened the existence of the weaker party.

The enmity shown towards the Macgregors by David II.

became hereditary in the Royal Family of the Stewarts. The chief of the clan had espoused the cause of James III., and resisted the unnatural rebellion headed by his son, which terminated at Sauchieburn; and when the victorious youth, James IV., came to the throne, he did not forget to gratify his vengeance upon the Macgregors. They were "put to the horn" as rebels, and their lands bestowed upon the favourites of the King. Their persecution was continued from this period onward; and their history becomes a mere record of cruel and bloody reprisals for the deeds of lawlessness to which they had been impelled in self-defence. Nor was James V. one whit behind his predecessors in this particular. His memorable Highland expedition was marked by a politic fostering of those clans whose leaders had espoused his cause, and a relentless pursuit of the minor tribes who had refused to submit to his authority. As a natural result, the greater clans absorbed the smaller, and the King could thus rule over diverse tribes through the agency of one chief. The Macgregors in Rannoch having been dispersed in the manner which we have described, put themselves wholly under the protection of the Campbells of Glenorchay, thus following the example of other broken men. The new chief to whom they adhered became responsible for their good behaviour, and gained in this manner an ascendancy over them which their own native-born rulers never enjoyed. And by their submission they won back for a time the right to hold leases of land which their outlawry had hitherto prevented, and though forbidden to exist as a separate clan, they were permitted to hold the position of inferior vassals.

The exceptional conditions under which they existed are well illustrated by several letters now in the possession of Sir Robert Menzies of that Ilk, and as these are not of easy access, we may be pardoned for quoting them at some length. They indicate the position of the Clan Gregor at the time better than any formal history could do.

The stringent measures adopted towards them by James V. were necessarily relaxed a little during the unsettled period of the Regency of Mary of Guise, as her safest policy was one of conciliation. To secure the support of the Clan Gregor, the Laird of Menzies, and Campbell of Glenorchay, she wrote the following letter on 7th February 1557 :—

“Regina.—We vnderstanding that it is within the power of Alexander Menzes of that ilk to ansuer for the gud reule of the Clangregour inhabitantis of the Rannoch, and that our cosing the Erle of Ergyle and Coline Campbell of Glenvrquhay hes the seruice of that clann, and that thai will do thare deligens to caus gud reule [be] keipit be the said clann, and for diuers vther resonable causis and considerationis moving ws, grantis and gevis licence to the said Alexander to set in tak and assedatioun all and hail his twenty pund land of Rannoch liand within the sherefdome of Perth to the auld tenentis and inhabitantis thairof of the Clangregour for the space of seven zeris ; and will and grantis that he nor his airis sall nocht be haldyn to our derest dochter nor ws to ansuer for thair gud reule during the said seven zeris, nor to enter tham to our lawes, our iustice airis, nor iustice courtis or thair demeritis.”

The faith in the Clan Gregor which the Regent thus professed was not well founded. Long ere the seven years of grace had elapsed it had been found necessary to issue letters of “fire and sword” against this “rebellious clan;” and, as formerly, the execution of this grave mandate fell to the Campbells. The Regent was dead, and as the Argyll family was nearly related, by marriage, to the throne, it is likely that they proceeded to great extremes under the powers given to them in 1564. These powers were certainly wide enough. The Commission under the signet of Mary, Queen of Scots, to the Sheriff of Perth, commanding him to make proclamation of the Earl of Argyll’s expedition against the Macgregors, is still in existence at Inverary Castle, and recites the list of the duties laid upon the Earl. It narrates “that the Clan

Gregor, being rebels, and at the horn for horrible crimes and offences committed by them, had put themselves in great companies, and drawn to them the broken men of sundry countries, and had most cruelly burned, slain, and harried the poor lieges of the realm, and otherwise oppressed them, that divers lands were laid waste." The Earl is enjoined to assemble all the lieges within "the Sherifdoms of Argyll, Tarbert, Dunbarton, Bute, Her Majesty's Stewardry, Earldom, and whole county of Menteith, the lands and country of Braidalbain, Boquhan, and so much of Stirling as lay west of Boquhan," and to "pursue and apprehend the malefactors within these bounds or farther, as occasion should occur," to bring them to justice, or to expel them from the realm. But when Mary visited Athole upon a hunting expedition in the same year, she had been alarmed at the masterful style in which the Campbells had acted towards the Macgregors, and saw that their intentions were to increase their own power rather than her authority in the district. She therefore wrote a highly sensible and discreet letter to Colin Campbell of Glenorchay, remonstrating with him upon this subject; and as it has not hitherto been published in this connection, we quote it entirely :—

"Traist freind, we greit zow wele. We remember we disponit to zow the escheitis of certaine personis of the Glen-gregour duelland in the Rannoch, and be that way sute ze the entres to thair stedingis; and we are informit that ze have plasit Makrannald in the samin rowmes quhairof the heretage pertenis to the Laird of Weym, and thair of Makgregor had neuir takkis of him. We are suirly informit that the said Makrannald is already to big ane hous and strenth within the Ile in Lochrannoch, and to labour the grind of the landis adiacent; quhilk hous wes castin doun and distroyit at command of our fader of guid memory, as yourself hes laitlie done sensyne. And sen it hes allwayis bene a receptacle and refuge to offendouris, we waitt nocht to quhat effect the biging of it or ony strenth in the Heland suld serue without our speciall command, and that the causis wer of befor con-

siderit be ws and our counsale. For to output the Glegregour and impute vther brokin men of the like conditioun, allwayis sic as of any continewance wer neuir permanent in our obedience, we jugeit nocht mete nor expedient to be done. And thairfoir our plesour is, that ze causs the werk begun in the Ile within the said loch to ceiss; and not that onlie, bot all vther innouation quhairof zour nychbouris may justlie complene, especiallie the inbringing of strangeris of vther clannis and cuntres. Bot lat all things rest without alteration quhill our returning, and than mete ws other at Sanct Johnstoun [Perth] or Dundee, as ze heir of our dyett, quhair we sall tak sik ordour in this behalf as apertenis to zour ressonable contentment. Subscriuit with our hand at the Lunkartis in Glentilth, the third day of August 1564."

The interest thus taken by Queen Mary in the unfortunate clan, which had been so nearly related to her own family in early days, did not cease here; though all her efforts to reinstate them in even the semblance of their former greatness proved futile. Her last attempt to rescue the clan from their oppressors is well worthy of attention.

CHAPTER IV.

THE STORY OF THE CLAN GREGOR—THEIR DISPERSION.

“The banner of the chieftain
Far, far below us waves ;
The war-horse of the spearman
Cannot reach our lofty caves ;
Thy dark clouds wrap the threshold
Of freedom's last abode ;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God !”—*Mrs Hemans.*

The Commission of Fire and Sword against the Macgregors had been granted to Argyll in March 1564 ; but what Mary had seen of their condition in August of that year had inclined her to mercy. She had remonstrated with Glenorchay for replacing the Clan Gregor by men no better than they had been ; but her commands and her requests were alike disobeyed. She applied, therefore, to the Laird of Weem (Menzies of that Ilk), begging that he would grant to the desolate clansmen the opportunity of sustaining themselves by their own industry ; and generously offering to relieve him of all surety for their good behaviour. As the letter shows a side of Mary's character which often escapes the notice of the historian, and as it is not to be found either in the histories of the time or of the Macgregor family, we transcribe it entirely :—

“Traist freind, we greit zou weill. We vnderstand that diuerss personis of the Clan-gregour occupiit and inhabit zour landis of the Rannoch, fra the quhilk thay wer eiecitit the tyme of thair rebelloun. Now as ze knaw we haue ressauit thame in our peax, and sen thai can not leif without sum rowmes and possessionis, we pray and effectuuslie desir zou to permitt thaim to occupie and manure the same landis and stedingis quhilkis thai had and broukit of zou of before, and mak thame ressonable takkis thairvpoun for pament of males and dewiteis,

visit and wont, as ze will do ws thankfull plesour. And further, quhairas ze may feir to be constrenit to ansuer for the saidis personis and thair doyngis, as duelland vpoun zour land, be verteu of the generall band, we be thir presentis exoneris, relevis, and dischargis zou of zour said band in that behalf, sa far as the samyn may extend towert ony personis of the said Clan-gregour or vtheris imputt in zour landis be thame; and will and grantis that ze sall na wis be callit, accusit, or in ony wys persewit thairfoir, nochtwithstanding the said generall band, or ony clause thairin contenit, or vther lawis or ordinances quhatsumeuir, anent the quhilkis we dispens be thir presentis. Gevin vnder our signet and subscriuit with our hand, at Drymmen, the last day of August 1566.

“ MABIE R.

“ To our traist freynd the Lard of Weym.”

The power of Mary to perform the kind actions which her heart dictated was greatly limited at this time, and within two years the fatal battle of Langside terminated entirely her rule in Scotland. And it is not improbable that the interest which she had shown in this unhappy clan rendered them the objects of suspicion to the Regents who governed during her imprisonment in England. It is at least certain that from this time forward the Macgregors were pursued with unabated rigour. In 1577 the Regent Morton advised the Laird of Weem to “mak warningis” on the Clan Gregor for their removal from the very lands for which Queen Mary had supplicated, alleging that he received from them neither “profit nor obedience.” In 1583 a long-standing dispute between Menzies and Glenorchay was settled by the Earl of Atholl, who had been appointed arbiter; and in his decree it was expressly stipulated that Glenorchay should on no account permit the Macgregors or any others in their name to “labour, use, or manure” the lands leased to him.

This negative method of oppression soon produced its natural result. The clan, forced to win their subsistence by other than lawful means, became pariahs of society, and lived upon the industry of other men; and by the direction of

James VI., active measures were adopted for their suppression. It is hardly credible that in an enlightened age warrants for the extermination of the Macgregors were publicly sold to any who chose to purchase; and that the unfortunate members of the clan were literally hunted for sport or gain by their enemies and neighbours. On the shores of Loch Awe even at this day there is shown the "Macgregor's Cave," which was the final refuge of one of these wretched men from the rage of his ruthless pursuers; and tradition relates that, baffled by the security of his retreat, his foes traced him to his lair with their bloodhounds, and slew him remorselessly, as though he had been a beast of prey.

The Earl of Argyll obtained a general commission in 1593 against "the wicked Clan Gregour, the Steuartis of Baquidder, and diuers vtheris brokin men of the hielandis," which authorised him to "persew and assege their houssis and strenthis, raise fyre and vse all kynd of force and weirlyke ingyne" for their overthrow. During the same year "Robert Galbraith of Kilcreuch" was denounced as a rebel because he had not found surety that he would not "resett, supplie, nor intercommune with ony personn of the surname of Makgregour, nor furneise thame meit, drink, hous, nor harbery." They were reduced thus to the position of a race so accursed that to do them the smallest kindness was to incur the most severe penalty of the law.

Shortly after this time occurred one of those unfortunate incidents in their history which (justly or otherwise) placed them beyond the reach of mercy—we allude to the tragical affair known as "The Raid of Glenfruin." We have not space to detail this episode here; and though the evidence advanced against the Macgregors was never thoroughly sifted, we cannot pause to examine it. It is sufficient for our purpose to record that the clan was accused of what must have been a savage and inexcusable massacre, without apparently one extenuating circumstance to exonerate them. The story was

told to James VI., with such oratorical additions probably as suited the narrator, and that ireful monarch at once proceeded to avenge the murder. The services of the hereditary enemy of the clan—the Earl of Argyll—were again called for; and a Commission was granted to that nobleman, dated “Hali-ruidhous, 24 February, 1603,” which should have finally disposed of the clan. As an instance of this summary method of procedure we may describe its contents.

The Commission relates that “whereas the disorderit and wicked thevis and lymmaris of the Clangregour quha hes sa lang continewit in murthour, bluidsched, thift, reif, sorning, and oppressioun upoun our peaceable and guid subiectis, have in February instant, in oppin hostilitie, enterit within the Lennox, quhair in maist barbarous and cruell maner thay haue mordreist and slane sax or sevin scoir of our honest and peaceable subiectis, without respect to man or bairnes, and have herryit the haille cuntrey, to the displeasure of God, contempt of the King’s authority, and slander of the whole nation, if the offence should remain unpunished. Therefore, We, and lordis of our secrett counsall, hes resolvit and avowed that this viperous and vnhappy generatioun salbe followit, huntit, and persewit, with fyre and suord, ay and quhill [until] thay be extirpat and rutit out, and expellit the haille boundis of our dominionis.” For this purpose Archibald, Earl of Argyll, is granted power to convene the inhabitants, pursue all of the name of Macgregor, apprehend them, and execute justice upon them according to the laws, and to prosecute them with fire and sword, and all kind of rigour and extremity, and never to leave off the pursuit of them until they be utterly expelled from the land. The Earl is also instructed to warn the justices of the bounds adjacent to his own lands of Argyll and Tarbat, to which the said “limmaris” may flee, to levy a hundred “able fechtand men” within his own country, and to meet with the forces to be raised by the other justices at the head of Lochrannoch, on the sixth day of

April next to come, and concur with them in the pursuit of the said limmers. The thoroughness of the measures against the Macgregors may be understood from the unusual clause which permits him to engage other outlaws in this raid. It is expressly provided that as he may need to employ some men "quha ar not ansuerable to our lawis," they shall not be challenged while so employed, only that Argyll must be answerable that they do not "reif, sorne, herry, nor oppress the countrey, nor tak meit and drink bot for reddy and present payment." The barons and gentlemen who join him are empowered to "lay on a stent" for the support of their forces; and all the inhabitants are charged to concur with the Commissioner, and follow his directions in the pursuit of the Clan Gregor, "vnder the paine of tinsall [loss] of lyfe, landis and guidis."

More complete machinery for destroying an enemy than that here indicated could hardly be devised; and yet it was not thoroughly successful. The criminal records of the twenty succeeding years show that the process of extermination was slow and ineffectual, despite the drastic nature of these coercive measures. On the 3d of April 1603 the Privy Council passed an Act abolishing the name of Macgregor, and forbidding the use of this surname under the pain of death. Two years later this Act was modified, and a remission was granted to all who would change their name, and find caution to obey the laws of the country. That the stringent measures already described had not immediately effected their purpose is proved by the fact that on the 19th April 1605 the Privy Council agreed that if the Earl of Argyll, "at the first day of June, should crave any silver to be given to him for the furtherance of his Majesty's service against the Clan Gregor" it should be advanced, and a second grant made, if necessary. Two years after this the clan was yet unsubdued, although the energy of Argyll had been so unremitting that King James deemed it expedient to reward him for his services. There is still extant

a characteristic letter from the King to David, Lord Scone, his Comptroller, directing him to make payment to the Earl of Argyll of "sameikle of our landis and lordship of Kintyre as will amont in zearlie rent to twentie chalder of victuall, heretabillie to him and his airis, togidder with the sowme of twentie thowsand merkis Scottis money, to be payit to him at Martmes nixt." This reward is expressly stated to be "in consideration and recompance of the goode and notable seruice done to ws . . . against that insolent and weikit race of the Clangregor, notorious lymmeris and malefactouris."

This letter is dated from "our Court at Whytehall, the nyntein of July, 1607;" but though the reward was paid the work was far from being completed. In August of this same year the Earls of Dunfermline and Dunbar forwarded a joint missive to the Laird of Weem, which shews how difficult the suppression of the clan had been. The terms in which they are described are not less opprobrious than formerly. The letter proceeds thus:—

"This proude rebellious and dissobedyence of the barbarous and detestable lymmaris callit the Clangregour, who so lang hes continewit in committing of bloode, thift, reiff, and oppression vpon the Kingis Maiesties peciable and goode subiectis, having most iustlie procurit his Maiesties haviwraith and displeasour againe thame, insofar as suche a handfull of miserable catiues dar presome to continew rebellious, whenas the haill remanent clannis, alsweele of the Heylandis as of the Yllis, are become ansuerable and obedyant," &c.

The writers then express his Majesty's resolve to suppress the rebels, giving orders to the Laird of Weem, as had also been given to the Lairds of Glenorchay and Lawers, to assist the Sheriff of Perth in its execution.

The scene of the conflict between the Macgregors and their enemies was thus constantly shifting. When Argyll attacked them in Glenstrae or Glenlyon they fled to Rannoch; and when checked there by the Campbells and Menzies they

sought shelter amongst the rocks of Loch Awe, or amid the darksome recesses of Glencoe. Early in the year 1611 they took possession of the island of Varnoch, in Loch Katrine, and fortified it, making it the rendezvous of the clan, and conveying the spoils of their forays to this almost inaccessible retreat. They were besieged here by Robert Campbell of Glenfalloch, the second son of the Laird of Glenorchay; but the severity of the weather and the strength of their position forced him to abandon the blockade; and it was not until the end of July of that year that ten of the offenders were captured, and "justified" (as the old term expressed it) at the "Burrow-mure" of Edinburgh. The difficulty of apprehending the members of this clan is shown by the fact that in 1613 the Courts of Justice were still engaged prosecuting stray clansmen for their share in the massacre of Glenfruin, which had taken place ten years before that time.

It is not easy to arrive at a conclusion as to the cause of this tardiness. When Alaster Macgregor of Glenstrae, the chief of the clan, was treacherously captured and brought to trial by Argyll in 1604, he publicly accused that nobleman of having fomented the disturbances in the Highlands for his own purposes, and even of having employed himself and several of his proscribed clan to produce the disaffection which Argyll was commissioned to repress. But the Earl's own explanation was that he found his policy against the Clan Gregor frustrated by the protection and maintenance which they received from neighbouring tribes. As though the powers granted by his former Commission were not sufficient, he obtained a further warrant under the Privy Seal in June 1612 to execute judgment against all those who assisted the rebels, to uplift fines which he might impose, and to enforce payment thereof. The lawlessness of the Macgregors was thus made a source of revenue to him; and it was clearly his interest to leave a remnant of the race in the land, and to keep them in a state of perpetual revolt.


Nor was this the only use which the unscrupulous Earl made of the enmity of the Clan Gregor. He had obtained certain lands in Kintyre upon the condition that he would build within five years a town fit to be erected into a Royal burgh; but the five years had elapsed without any action having been taken in the matter by him. When appealed to for an explanation, in 1613, he professed that his "service against the Clan Gregour hes for the space of the last twa yeiris withhaldin him, and in all appearance is lyk this yeir to withhald him, from building of the said town;" and the King was graciously pleased to accept of this excuse. Two years later—in 1615—there was no sign of any attempt on his part to perform his obligation, though he had been lifting the rents in Kintyre during eleven years on this condition. It was, therefore, in every way important to him that this "theifing and murtherous clan" should be kept in active immorality; and the policy which he had introduced was faithfully followed by his successors.

Further recital of the actions taken against the Macgregors would be tedious; and we shall merely summarise them so as to bring down the records of the clan to the time of Rob Roy. It is our purpose to show the condition of the Clan Gregor at that period, so that Rob Roy's relation to his countrymen may be fully understood.

In 1611 an Act of Council forbad the selling of arms to Highlanders without special authority, "to the effect, it may be clearly understood, that the said armour is not for the use or behoof of the Clan Gregor." To limit their powers of mischief still further, it was provided by proclamation in 1613 "that no person or persons whatsoever who are called Macgregors, and keep that name, shall at no time hereafter bear nor wear any armour but a pointless knife to cut their meat, under pain of death." This latter prohibition was renewed in August 1621, "because there was a new brood and generation of the Clan Gregor risen up." By special enactment in

1613 the Macgregors, even though they had renounced the name, were forbidden "to meet together in any part of the kingdom in greater numbers than four persons." Outlaws of other clans were promised remission if they could prove that they had killed any of the Clan Gregor, such a deed being looked upon as a sufficient expiation for the most heinous offence. Indeed, it is expressly stipulated that Robert Arroch "be not pardoned unless he bring in at least half a dozen of their heads." Despite these extreme measures the clan was not extirpated in 1630, but at that time had formed alliances with other tribes, and marched throughout the country during the early years of Charles I., "not only committing private depredations but open ravages." The vengeance of the King's supporters had formerly been executed upon the wives of the freebooters when they had failed to capture their husbands, as it is credibly related that many of them were branded in the face with a red-hot key; but in 1633 the Parliament interposed its power to assist the Privy Council against the Macgregors, and declared heavy penalties "on clergymen christening infants with the name Gregor, and on notaries employing the surname of the Clan in legal documents."

The disturbances raised in the Highlands during 1633-36 by the famous Gilderoy, one of the Clan Gregor, did not induce any mitigation of these severities, and the Earl of Argyll emulated the fame of his forefathers by capturing this arch-rebel, who had put the Privy Council to defiance. But the fluctuating tide of the Royal fortunes at this time brought them into favour for a short period, and both Royalists and Covenanters coquetted to receive their support. In 1657 General Monck addressed a remonstrance to the Laird of Weem, begging him "not to give them (the Macgregors) any interruption in their possession of the lands of Rannogh;" and Captain William Daniell seconded this application by pointing out that any measures against the Clan Gregor would injure



both the Laird of Weem and the cause of the Commonwealth. In recognition of their services, on the other hand, Charles II. after his restoration, procured the annulling of all the Acts against the Macgregors, and permitted them to use once more their family name. This re-habilitation was accomplished by the Statute 1661, chap. 195, and the reason given for its introduction was "that those who were formerly designed Macgregors had, during the late troubles, conducted themselves with such loyalty and affection to his Majesty as might justly wipe off all memory of former miscarriages, and take away all marks of reproach for the same."

This record brings us now close to the time of Rob Roy's birth; and though the story has been somewhat protracted, it will serve to make his position and surroundings intelligible, and enable us more readily to understand the character of one whose name is known throughout Scotland.

CHAPTER V

ROB ROY'S FIRST EXPLOIT.

"A Highland lad my love was born,
The lowland laws he held in scorn;
But he still was faithful to his clan,
My gallant brow John Highlandman."—*Burns.*

It was during the time when the severe laws against the Macgregors had been relaxed to some extent through the unwonted gratitude of Charles II. that the hero of our history was born. Although he did not in his own person represent the family of the "High Chief of Clan Gregor," he was nearly related to it, and the prominent part which he took in public affairs during his life has given countenance to the supposition that he was the hereditary ruler of the clan. Without wandering into the mazes of a Highland genealogy, we may shortly explain his true relationship to the race with which his name is so inseparably associated. This is the more necessary as some grave misconceptions on this matter are still prevalent.

The chief of the Clan Gregor who ruled the tribe in 1480 had five sons, the youngest of whom was known by the familiar title of Dougal *Ciar Mohr*—the great mouse-coloured man. At this time the seat of the family was at Glenstrae, and they were suffering severely from the encroachments of the Campbells; so, to avoid the danger of maintaining his sons in one quarter of the country, the chief dispersed them to different parts of the land, that he might have refuge provided for him in case of misfortune. The lands of Balquidder were then in the possession of one of the Clan Macintyre, and, as their relations had been friendly, the chief persuaded him to adopt the young Dougal into his family as though he were his own son. So faithfully did Macgregor fulfil his assumed duties to his adopted father, that when the latter died he was

left as sole heir to his estate, and became himself a Highland laird of some importance. Much injustice has been done to his memory through an absurd tradition having been circulated that the melancholy massacre of Glenfruin had been perpetrated either by his own hands or under his direct orders. Even Sir Walter Scott was betrayed into repeating this legend in his introduction to "Rob Roy," though he afterwards apologised to the "offended phantom of Dugald Ciar Mohr" when it was pointed out to him that that chieftain had been dead a century before the massacre took place. So far as we can discover, Dougal conducted himself with discretion during a most difficult period, and left a considerable heritage to his two sons.

The younger of these—by name Gregor *Dhu*—became the founder of the Glengyle branch of the Macgregors, and the immediate ancestor of Rob Roy. It may astonish those who have been accustomed to believe that the Clan Gregor lived by plundering their neighbours in defiance of both law and equity, to learn that these members of it owed their wealth to their own industry, and received the confidence and respect of their superiors. Gregor *Dhu*, though originally a cottar holding his croft from a sept named M'Cruithair, by diligence and frugality amassed considerable wealth, and was latterly able to become tenant of all the lands of Glengyle, when misfortune compelled this tribe to abandon them. The young Laird of Buchanan, his territorial superior, esteemed him as a personal friend, and granted a favourable lease of those lands which his family occupied for four generations.

His son, Callum Macgregor, who succeeded him, fell into disgrace through having been concerned, in his youthful days, in the abduction of a Perthshire heiress, but the sentence of outlawry which had been pronounced against him for non-appearance at Court to answer the charge was finally cancelled, and he obtained possession of his patrimony upon the death of his father. The younger of his two sons, Donald, attached himself to the army of Charles II., and rose to the rank of

Lieutenant-Colonel. He married a daughter of Campbell of Taineagh, and his second was that Robert Macgregor whose story we have to relate.

The exact year of his birth cannot now be ascertained. It is probable, however, that it took place shortly after the Restoration in 1660, when the persecution of his clan had for a time ceased, and when they had been restored to the royal favour which had been so long withheld from them. Nor is it unlikely that the act of grace whereby they had been permitted to assume their ancestral name had been procured by the solicitations of Rob Roy's father, who might plead that his own eminent services to King Charles entitled his clan to some consideration. But, as we shall shortly see, the conduct of that clan during some of the raids in which his own son was engaged led to the reversal of their pardon, and the revival of all the prohibitory laws against them.

As the second son of a second son, Rob Roy came into the possession of no patrimonial estate; and the profession of arms which his father had adopted prevented him from receiving paternal instruction during his early years. Glengyle was in the hands of his uncle John, and his mother resided in a small cottage on the estate, where she reared her children in comparative obscurity, intending that they should devote themselves to agricultural pursuits. The warlike glories of the race of Macgregor seemed now to be out of place and undesirable.

But it is no easy task to turn a mind so constituted as was that of Rob Roy from dwelling upon the traditions of his clan. Naturally impulsive and of a fiery character, he could not hear of the indignities and persecutions which his forefathers had endured without emotion. All around him he would behold traces of the injustice and barbarity with which his tribe had been treated for centuries. Not far from the spot where his youth was passed lay the glens and straths which had been once the possessions of his ancestors, and

from which they were ruthlessly and unjustly evicted. The Macgregors, at one time the most powerful of the tribes in the west, were scattered throughout the kingdom, and only suffered to resume the name they had been deprived of as a special favour. Imbued with something of that Celtic fervour which still lingers amongst the race, and taught by the magic influence of Gaelic poetry to revere the warrior and despise the patient agriculturist, it is not wonderful that his first idea was to abandon the peaceful and inglorious tasks designed for him, and to win fame and fortune by deeds of arms.

His physical conformation gave him peculiar advantages. He was robust and powerful, and his arms were not only muscular, but of such unusual length that tradition relates that he could "tie his garter without stooping." In contests with the broadsword—then the national weapon—he was reckoned to be without a rival even whilst he was a young man; and this superiority he retained until a late period of his life. Though not of gigantic stature, his frame was well-knit and hardy, and fitted to endure easily the privations of a wandering life. Above his brow the hair grew in natural curls, of that auburn tinge which gained for him the sobriquet of *Roy*—red-haired—that now forms a portion of his name. Keen and piercing eyes flashed forth defiance from beneath the shaggy brows which o'ershadowed them; and the firm lip, high cheek-bones, and Napoleonic jaw indicated determination and tenacity of purpose, if there be any truth in physiognomy. To judge from the portrait of him which still exists, we might conclude that he was eminently one "born to command," mild and gentle if unthwarted, but fiercely impatient of contradiction. Such characters may remain undiscovered whilst passing through the ordinary phases of life; but in times of turbulence, when leaders of men are required, they will inevitably come to the front to fulfil their mission.

The scenes amid which he was reared, the friends who

surrounded him, and the traditional poetry in which he took delight, all exercised their influences upon him. To the latter especially did he owe that romantic and chivalrous demeanour which frequently led him into almost Quixotic exploits for the release of captive maidens, and the overthrow of their oppressors. Confident in his own strength and agility, fear was unknown to him; and he could dare and do many things from which his boldest companions shrank back. This is not the kind of man to become a quiet and respectable grazier, although that was the fate first designed for him.

Whilst a young man he commenced his career in this capacity. He leased a considerable extent of grazing ground on the Braes o' Balquidder, and devoted himself with energy to his vocation. The place offered exceptional advantages for this occupation, since it was within easy distance of the principal Lowland towns where cattle could be disposed of, and yet afforded good pasturage without exposure to the extreme severity of a Highland winter. Prosperity attended him for some time, and his flocks and herds increased in the land; though he suffered severely at the hands of the "broken men" from the North, who lifted his cattle with as little remorse as though he had been a "Lowland Laird." To resist these depredators he organised a body of his clansmen, whom he maintained for this purpose, and who formed the nucleus of that band which he afterwards led to battle.

At this period the chieftains on the Highland border looked upon the "black mail" which they received for protecting their neighbours as a portion of their income. The military training of Rob Roy's father had enabled him to conduct the pursuit of marauding parties with success; and after he left the army and settled in Glengyle he was much sought after by the suffering lairds in the district. When age had impaired his faculties he deputed this task to Rob, who soon became an adept at it; and the men whom he had trained to protect his own goods were often employed restoring those of

his neighbours. The first exploit of this kind in which Rob Roy was engaged is worthy of narration.

The ruined Castle of Finlarig, whose ivy-covered walls rise from the midst of an undulating vale near Killin, was at this time the seat of a branch of the Campbell family, and the cattle was under the protection of Rob Roy by special contract. The campaigns of Montrose, and the distracted state of the country thereafter, had taught and encouraged the clans in the extreme north and west of Scotland to descend upon the Lowlands for their plunder, and they had rapidly learned the lesson. The utmost vigilance of the "black-mailers" was required to restrain them within bounds. A party of Macraus from the north-west of Ross-shire suddenly appeared on the estate of Finlarig, and laid violent hands upon the goods of the laird, carrying off "fifteen head of cattle," and driving rapidly northwards to their rendezvous. Intelligence was sent to Rob Roy of this "her'ship," and he at once mustered twelve of his men and set off in pursuit. There was little to guide him in his task, but by tracking the "trail" of the party as an Indian in the backwoods might do, he became convinced that they had shaped their course for Strathspey with their booty. The first day was spent in fruitless search, and the chieftain and his men snatched some slight repose beneath the canopy of night. The following day gave them little further advantage, and the second night found them almost despairing. They had wandered far away from Finlarig, and had entered upon the district of Badenoch, then inhabited by tribes to whom the name of Macgregor was hateful. It was not without some trepidation that Rob Roy's companions prepared to rest upon the heather in the midst of a hostile country. The place which they had reached was the entrance to a glen whose precipitous rocks seemed to bar their further progress. The trail which they had followed had become fainter and fainter as they journeyed northward, and here

there seemed to be no passage for those whom they were pursuing. The streamlet which meandered through the hollow of the glen was fringed with brushwood to its very brim, and only a narrow pathway appeared by the margin of the water. They could not hope to find their quarry in such a spot.

Hardly had they laid down to rest ere they were awakened from their slumbers. Their leader pointed towards a gleam of firelight far up the glen, which the moist rocks reflected with lurid glare. Stealthily approaching the spot they found that it proceeded from a fire which a wandering band of gipsies had kindled, intending to pass the night in merriment within this secure retreat. The sudden appearance of Rob Roy and his armed followers disturbed their glee, as they had deemed themselves safe from interruption. Their replies to his inquiries led the chief to the conclusion that he was at last on the track of the fugitives. The gipsies had seen a party of Highlanders resting for the night a little further up the glen than the place where they stood ; and they offered to conduct Rob Roy with secrecy to the spot. Preceded by these guides the Macgregors pursued the narrow pathway which followed the windings of the stream, preparing themselves for the fray that seemed imminent.

Morn was breaking as they reached the scene of the bivouac. The place had been chosen more for its seculsion than defensibility, as the Macraus did not anticipate an attack in so retired a position. The road which they had to follow ran through a narrow gorge formed by overhanging rocks, which afforded neither shelter nor means of escape, and Macgregor saw the necessity of descending upon them suddenly whilst in this critical situation. They were already astir, and preparing to resume their journey, when he arrived ; so he commanded them at once to stand and deliver up their ill-gotten plunder. His summons was unheeded. Reckless of the fact that the Macraus considerably outnumbered his own little band, Rob dashed into the midst of them, broadsword in hand, and by a few powerful

and dexterous blows he disabled six of them. The Macgregors were soon hotly engaged man to man with the remainder, and after a fierce contest they succeeded in putting the reivers to flight, and obtaining possession of their prey. The Macraus left two of their number dead upon the field, whilst eleven had been seriously wounded. Nor did the Macgregors escape scatheless. One of them was killed, four were wounded, and their leader himself received a severe sword cut on the left arm while attacking the captain of the other party. But they had won the day, however arduous it had been, and they drove back the regained cattle to Finlarig Castle in triumph.

The fame of this exploit soon spread throughout the neighbourhood, and many of the lairds in the Lennox and Stirlingshire put themselves under the protection of Roy Roy, and cheerfully paid tribute to him. Encouraged by his success, he gradually increased the number of his followers, until he found himself at the head of a daring band of clansmen, whose fearless courage made them the dread of the northern reivers. His reputation for faithfulness to his engagements, joined to his skill in discovering, and rapidity in restoring stolen property, led his neighbours to view the increase of his forces without apprehension; and the Macgregors who followed him became established in the district as a kind of native police whose services were indispensable.

Though organised for purely defensive purposes, it was not possible to restrain this band of the Macgregors from plunder when sufficient temptation came in their way; and, whilst they were scrupulously careful to avoid meddling with those of their clients who paid "black mail" regularly to them, they did not always refrain from spoiling the misguided lairds who despised their aid. Roy Roy himself was not immaculate in this respect; and there is little doubt that he led the famous foray upon Kippen in person. As this incident exercised considerable influence upon his after career, we must relate it.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HER'SHIP OF KIPPEN.

“The mountain-sheep were fleeter,
But the valley-sheep were fatter;
We therefore deemed it meeter
To carry off the latter.”—*Peacock*.

Though William, Prince of Orange, ascended the throne of the United Kingdom after the bloodless revolution of 1688, he did not receive the support of the Scottish chiefs for several years afterwards. The Highlanders—partly because of their attachment to the Romish Church, and partly in consequence of their adherence to the ancient house of Stewart—refused to accept a foreign king whose claim to their allegiance was so remote as his; and the majority of them considered James VII. as their only legitimate sovereign. Thus, long after the absentee monarch had been abandoned by his English subjects, this singular devotion on the part of the Highland clansmen was kept alive, and broke forth continually in favour of himself, of his son, and of that grandson who survives in the ballads of Scotland as “Bonnie Prince Charlie.” The abortive attempts of Claverhouse to lead the Highlanders into a counter-revolution to restore James VII. to the throne which he had vacated were terminated by the fatal conflict in the Pass of Killiecrankie, and the loyal fervour of the northern clans made itself visible at rare intervals, and in isolated places.

Whilst the country was in this unsettled state, Rob Roy determined to avail himself of the opportunity which his position afforded him. He found himself at the head of a band of determined men, who obeyed his orders without question, placed on the confines of that fertile country whose inhabi-

tants had chosen peace with King William rather than persecution with King James, and he was not slow to understand the power which he thus possessed. It could be no easy task to restrain the propensities of his troops within bounds, so he deemed it prudent to divert their energies into apparently legitimate channels. He put himself in communication with the exiled monarch, offering to levy war upon all in his neighbourhood who refused to acknowledge His Majesty.

King James was more profuse of his commissions after his dethronement than he had been during his brief reign, so he readily granted a warrant to his new ally "to plunder the rebel Whigs," framed in a fashion sufficiently liberal to excuse almost any excess. Armed with this power, Rob Roy prepared to make a descent upon Stirlingshire, and to spoil the enemies of the Stuart dynasty. It was his first appearance in political warfare, and he determined to make it memorable. He summoned his men to meet him in battle array in Balquidder at the close of the harvest time of 1691.

At this time much of the land in the south-eastern portion of Stirlingshire belonged to Sir Alexander Livingstone of Bedlormie, a scion of the ancient family of the Livingstones of Callander. For centuries this race had been devoted adherents of the Stuarts, and in the reign of Queen Mary had especially testified to the strength of their attachment. Lord Livingstone and his son had faithfully followed her fortunes during their lives, and his daughter was one of those "Four Maries" celebrated in song and story. Sir Alexander had himself experienced the bounty of James VII., as that monarch bestowed upon him the wardenship of the Palace of Linlithgow, and made him keeper of Blackness Castle. But when once the victorious Prince of Orange had established himself upon the throne, Livingstone began to "trim his sails to catch the favouring breeze," and professed deep devotion to the cause of William III. To Rob Roy, therefore, he would appear as a selfish renegade, who could abandon the

traditions of his forefathers that he might save his estate, and barter the honour of his house for paltry gain. No scruples would prevent him from attacking such a one in his tenderest part, by depriving him of the wealth which he sought to retain at all hazards.

The Macgregors mustered in force at the old kirk of Balquidder in answer to the command of their chief, fully armed, and ready to do his bidding. He had received intelligence that a valuable herd of cattle belonging to Livingstone was to pass through Kippen on the way to Stirling on a certain day, and he determined to intercept it. Taking the south road by Aberfoil, his party crossed the Forth, and entered the ancient town of Buchlyvie by a circuitous path. No tidings had reached this spot of the expected booty, and, as the road to Kippen lay through the town, Rob ordered his men to await its arrival there.

The quaint, old-fashioned town offered little temptation to the plunderers. It was principally occupied by labourers employed upon the adjoining estates, and, though of some extent, was far from wealthy. The traditional description of it is more forcible than elegant, and yet there is every probability that it is not wholly unfounded. It runs thus :—

“ Baron o’ Buchlyvie,
May the foul fiend drive ye,
An’ a’ to pieces rive ye,
For building sic a toun,
Whaur there’s neither horse-meat, nor man-meat,
nor a chair to sit down.”

It was not Rob Roy’s intention to harass the poor inhabitants of the township, as his object was rather to strike a blow for King James by attacking the Whig proprietors who opposed him. He disposed of his men, therefore, in convenient positions to effect his purpose of carrying off the cattle of Lord Livingstone.

But the cottars of Buchlyvie had no faith in Highland generosity. All their previous experience had taught them

that when the caterans from the north entered within the bounds of Stirlingshire they spread devastation all around them, placing no restraint whatever upon their actions, and there was nothing in the appearance of the young commander and his band to indicate that they differed from their predecessors. Anticipating the worst, therefore, from this unexpected incursion, the townsmen silently prepared to defend their hearths and homes. Messengers were sent eastward to Kippen and southward to Balfron, warning all the countryside of this raid, and asking for assistance against the Highland reivers. The tartans which the latter wore betrayed their clanship, and the mention of the dreaded name of "Macgregor" acted like a charm upon the Lowlanders. They gradually gathered from all quarters into Buchlyvie, ready to resist the first attack upon them.

As day wore on, and no signs of his intended prey appeared, Rob Roy decided to leave the town and encamp on the Muir of Kippen for the night. He could not fail to mark the increased numbers of the countrymen who were entering the place, nor to notice the menacing attitude which they had assumed. Prudence dictated that he should abandon the lanes and narrow alleys of the town and lead his men to the heath, where danger might be seen approaching, so he speedily withdrew before a blow had been exchanged.

The villagers of Kippen, meanwhile, had been aroused by exaggerated reports of the foray, and were rapidly advancing towards Buchlyvie, armed with such weapons as their agricultural pursuits supplied. Rob Roy thus found himself placed betwixt two parties eager to attack him, but with whom he had no quarrel. He sought to avoid a contest, knowing that the imperfect weapons brought against him were unequally matched with the claymores of his own hardy mountaineers, but fate decided otherwise. Just as the sun was sinking in the west the cattle of Lord Livingstone, for which he had waited so patiently all day, were seen slowly

approaching the place which he occupied. There was no longer time to parley, or to warn the villagers of their danger. One word to his men set them flying forward with speed to capture the quarry which had brought them from their own mountain retreat.

The impetuous charge of the Macgregors was met by the Kippen band, who interposed between them and the herd, threatening them with the scythes and clubs with which they had hastily armed themselves. Irritated by an opposition which they had striven to avoid, the Highlanders sought to drive their assailants back by using only the flat of the sword; but their efforts were in vain, and in self-defence they were compelled to cut and thrust as well as to parry. Thoroughly roused now, and with their northern blood all afire, they rushed upon their opponents, shouting the ancient slogan of their race—*Ard choille*—the rallying cry of the Macgregors. In a brief space the road was cleared before them, and the helpless Lowlanders fled in dismay, leaving the herd of cattle in the roadway undefended. The keeper to whom they had been committed made a feeble attempt to resist the spoilers, but he was remorselessly cut down and left lifeless on the ground. Their purpose was accomplished when they gained possession of the “guidis and gear” of the Whig Lord.

Rob Roy's fiercer passions had been inflamed by the un-called-for interference of the Lowland band, so he decided to teach them forbearance in the future. Detaching a company of his men to guard the spoil, he made his way to the village of Kippen, which he found almost deserted. The panic that had seized upon its defenders had not abated, and they were afraid to return to their homes, where they knew the chief would seek them. Rob changed his conduct towards them when he saw their cowardice, and, taking the cattle from every byre in the village which he could easily reach, he made one vast herd of bestial, and drove all before him to join his companions. By speedy by-ways and secret paths

with which he was thoroughly familiar, his party returned home to Balquidder elated with their success, and laden with booty. Seldom had a Highland raid been so productive, yet so bloodless.

Thus, in one day ended the Her'ship* of Kippen, but its influence was felt throughout Scotland for many years afterwards. The boldness of the deed, and the warrant by King James for its commission, attracted the notice of the new Whig rulers, and more stringent measures were taken against the Highland clans than heretofore. Full and complete submission to King William was required from them; and they were forbidden to carry arms unless by special permission. The spirit in which these restrictions were enforced was designedly unjust, and led to the compassing of that foul blot upon King William's memory, the Massacre of Glencoe. Personally, Rob Roy did not suffer for this exploit, although a short time afterwards the penal laws against his clan were renewed, and he was deprived of his name, as his ancestors had been, and made an outlaw in the land of his birth. But with "his foot upon his native heath," Roy Roy Macgregor set all their penalties at defiance, thinking probably, what the poet makes him say—

"What need of books?
Burn all the statutes and their shelves;
They stir us up against our kind,
And worse—against ourselves.

The creatures see of flood and field,
And those that travel in the wind,
With them no strife can last—they live
In peace—and peace of mind.

For why?—because the good old rule
Sufficeth them—the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."

The success which had attended his first appearance in political life as a Jacobite confirmed him in his adherence to

* From the Scottish verb *herry*, to rob.

the old family of the Stuarts, and he remained devoted to their interests for many years afterwards. But the pitiless manner in which the Whig Government sought to suppress Highland disaffection prevented him from taking any active part in the restoration of King James at this time. Perhaps the chief reason for his remaining quiet during this period was the fact that Campbell of Gleuorchay, the hereditary enemy of the Macgregors, had declared for King William. Rob Roy and he had been upon comparatively good terms, even after he had been created Earl of Breadalbane, but their lands lay too near each other for Rob to venture any serious exploit for the cause of "the King owre the water." The treachery and baseness which the Earl had shown in the Massacre of Glencoe might well make Rob Roy dread the resentment of one who has been described as "having the gravity of a Spaniard, the cunning of a fox, the wisdom of a serpent, and the slipperiness of an eel." So the chieftain "tamed his heart of fire," and set about the increasing of his wealth by industry.

Rob Roy's father had died a short time before this, and he had found it necessary to maintain an establishment of his own at Balquidder. Unoccupied by war, his mind had "lightly turned to thoughts of love," and prudence counselled what passion dictated—that he should take a wife. His choice had fallen upon a kinswoman—Mary, the daughter of Macgregor of Comar—and for once the course of true love ran smoothly. They were united in marriage, and whilst their wedded life lasted he never had cause to regret the day when he led her to his Highland home. Her memory has suffered severely at the hands of the romancers, and though she appears in fiction as a Scottish Amazon thirsting for the blood of her enemies, credible history describes her in a very different manner. She was of a gentle and amiable disposition, one whose ambition rose no higher than the ruling of her household, and who never meddled in the political schemes which latterly employed her husband. She did receive pro-

vocation sufficient to have altered her nature (as we shall shortly see), but her spirit was inclined to forgiveness rather than revenge. And though unlike both her husband and her children in disposition, she won the respect and love, the pity and kindly regard, of all whom she encountered.

For several years after his marriage Rob Roy devoted himself to the peaceful, but lucrative, calling of a cattle-dealer. The herds which he reared on the Braes of Balquidder were taken by him to Falkirk and Dunbarton, and sold at the trysts there, and his upright dealing, strict regard to his promise, and honourable bearing soon made him notable in a profession where candour is not always considered commendable. The quantity as well as quality of the cattle which he reared frequently made it advisable for him to cross the Border into England with them, and he thus became acquainted with many of the Southern roads and byways in the Lowlands, which knowledge afterwards proved of great value to him.

His ambition was to become the acknowledged head of his clan. He had brooded over the wrongs which the Macgregors had endured, and striven to discover some means of reinstating them in their former position ; but whilst he was merely a chieftain of the tribe he could do little to advance his purpose. If by any means he could become the chief of his clansmen he might be able to save them from destruction. The diplomacy which he adopted to accomplish this intention was astute and successful, and resembled more the policy of an Italian statesman than of a Scottish Highlander. While the power remained in the hands of the impotent youth who was chief of the Macgregors at this time there was little hope of the clan regaining their status, so Rob Roy determined to obtain the place which he so unworthily filled, and laid his plans accordingly. His attainment to the dignity of chief formed the turning-point in his career, and is not the least romantic episode in his life, as our next chapter will show.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RAID ON BALQUIDDER.

“ I lookit east—I lookit west,
I saw the darksome coming even ;
The wild bird sought its cosy nest,
The kid was to the hamlet driven ;
But house nor hame aneath the heaven,
Except the skeugh of greenwood tree,
To seek a shelter in was given,
To my three little bairns and me.”—*Hogg*.

At that remote period in the history of the Clan Gregor when they were forced to abandon their homes in Glenorchay by the invading Campbells, the Laird of Macgregor retired to Glenstrae, and at the same time purchased a tract of land on the shores of Loch Lomond, in possession of which he placed his son. The country at that time was barren and apparently inarable, but this purchase prevented his enemies from spreading southwards, and the industry of his descendants made it ultimately of great value. The estate extended from the debouchment of Glenfalloch down the eastern margin of the Loch to the base of “ the lofty Ben Lomond,” and included the little hamlet of Inversnaid and the fields of Craigrostan. The landmarks of this ancient domain may still be traced by the curious visitor to these romantic shores.

During all the vicissitudes through which the clan passed this southern possession was held inviolate. The Campbells secured Glenorchay, and pursued the Macgregors into the remote recesses of the Muir of Rannoch ; they followed them southwards and took from them the district of Glenfalloch, thus cutting them off from the shores of Loch Awe ; but the lands of Craigrostan by some special good fortune were preserved from the rapacity of their enemies. And when Glen-

strae was forfeited and the Clan Gregor expelled from that locality, the seat of the chief was transferred to Craighrostan and Inversnaid.

The grazing-farm at Balquidder which Rob Roy occupied closely adjoined the chief's estate, and he knew that if he could gain possession of the latter he would become the most important man in all his tribe. Circumstances enabled him to accomplish the design which ambition suggested. Gregor Macgregor, the chief of the clan, died in 1693 unmarried, and bequeathed his property to an illegitimate brother, who assumed the title of chief unwarrantably. He did not long enjoy this honour, as he died in the following year, and was succeeded by his son, Hugh Macgregor, who sought to rule over the clan. But he was utterly devoid of the characteristics which had made the chiefs of the Macgregors famous, and had neither courage to plan nor skill to execute those measures which the critical condition of the clan rendered necessary. He was one of those unstable men whom we Scottish people call "weirdless," and whom we sum up in one expressive phrase as "fushionless as a docken." He was afflicted with that lack of stamina, that weakness of moral backbone which is inexcusable in a leader of men; so to save his clan from destruction Rob Roy determined to supplant him, and to take the reins of government into his own hands.

Hugh Macgregor had made proposals for a union by marriage with the family of the Laird of Leny; but Rob Roy interfered, and so influenced the Laird that the idea of a wedding was abruptly abandoned. He showed that young Macgregor had not been recognised as the head of his clan; that he neither held the position by right of birth, nor by the choice of his fellow-clansmen; and that his only purpose was to entrap the Laird into an alliance with him so as to countenance his claim. Defeated in this manner, the chief rapidly transferred his affections to the only daughter and heiress of Sir Humphry Colquhoun of Luss, one of the wealthiest ladies.

in the district; but Rob Roy again interposed, and his suit was rejected with disdain. Thus baffled on every hand, Hugh Macgregor entered into a matrimonial engagement with "a woman of mean extraction" in Falkirk, and effectually estranged all his friends from him by this reckless conduct. His pretensions to the chieftainship of the Macgregors were disallowed, and he left his native country, heartless and broken-spirited, never to return. Ere departing into voluntary exile, he sold the lands of Craigrostan to Rob Roy, who now claimed to be the hereditary chief of the Clan Gregor, and was enthusiastically received as such.

The importance which this alteration in his position gave him was soon made evident. He now possessed lands spreading from the Braes of Balquidder to the shores of Loch Lomond, and he had power not only over his own immediate followers, but also over all the members of his clan. The peculiar situation of his territory gave him exceptional advantages. The two houses of Montrose and Argyll were contending for the mastery in Scotland, and as Rob Roy's country lay precisely between their possessions in Stirlingshire and Argyllshire, neither could encroach upon the other without his consent. And thus it strangely happened that this petty Highland laird, the chief of a broken clan, whose very name was proscribed, was courted and flattered by two Scottish Dukes as though he held their fortunes in his power.

The first advances towards him were made by the Duke of Montrose. That nobleman proposed to secure his favour by lending money to him, and entered into a kind of partnership with him in his grazing speculations. It was in an evil moment that Rob listened to his proposals, and consented to become his debtor, and he had cause to regret this arrangement throughout the remainder of his life. Had Rob Roy been the greedy and unscrupulous man that he is sometimes described, he would never have acquiesced in the one-sided bargain which the Duke made with him. Montrose was to

place money in his hands to be invested in cattle, and if these sold well the profits were to be shared equally, but if their speculations proved unfortunate Rob was to be held responsible for all the money lent to him. From his after conduct there can be little doubt that Montrose made this proposal with the deliberate intention either of binding Macgregor to him by the ties of self-interest, or of ruining him utterly in the event of his failure.

At first matters went very smoothly with them. Rob Roy's skill as a cattle-dealer enabled him to purchase discreetly, and his reputation for honesty and uprightness in his dealings made him always sure of a market, so that the partnership seemed likely to prove a profitable one. But at last one untoward circumstance occurred to mar the harmony betwixt Montrose and him. He had engaged a young man named Macdonald to transact some business for him, but that person had proved unfaithful to his trust, and absconded, taking with him a large sum of money. His defection seriously compromised the chief, who had signed bills which he had no other means of meeting; and he saw nothing before him but commercial ruin and the loss of that good name which he had so long maintained. Montrose recognised his opportunity, and insisted upon immediate payment of the money which he had advanced. At such a time the demand was unreasonable, but Rob Roy, willing to deal fairly by him, granted him a wadset over his property for the amount. It was stipulated that Macgregor should have the right to redeem his lands by paying the money due to Montrose within a certain time. He made strenuous efforts to accomplish this object, urging all those who were indebted to him to assist him in his laudable attempt to maintain his reputation.

John Græme of Killearn, the factor of the Duke of Montrose, who had charge of this matter, treated Macgregor with extreme severity. He had probably received his instructions from the Duke, or he would scarcely have ventured to adopt

the high-handed method of procedure which he followed. He bullied and threatened Macgregor over the debt until he made his life miserable, and galled his spirit by making him feel that he was dependent for existence upon the caprice of Montrose. To escape this burden Rob Roy did his utmost to collect the money which was owing to him throughout the country, that he might wipe off this obligation, and made payments to the factor from time to time for this purpose. At length prosperity rewarded his diligence, and he saw the termination of this oppression at hand. Amongst the voluminous correspondence at Buchanan House there is still in existence a letter from Græme to the Duke of Montrose in which he records that he had got £50 from Rob Roy, "which was all he had at the tyme, but promises the rest in a fortnight or twenty days." Montrose did not intend that his power over Macgregor should cease so suddenly, and Græme therefore received instructions to make up a bill of interest and charges against him that would prevent him from redeeming his bond. And thus, when Rob took his hard-won money to Killearn, expecting to regain his estate thereby, he found to his dismay that he was still a long way from freedom.

Whilst Montrose was conducting this plot against Rob Roy, Argyll approached him from another quarter. The Campbells, as we have seen, had been the hereditary enemies of the Macgregors for centuries; but the Duke of Argyll proposed to relax the severities which had been practised against them, and to protect them from the consequences of their outlawry. He professed regret for the hardships which they had endured at the hands of his ancestors, and offered to make such reparation as lay in his power. After the name of Macgregor had been again forbidden, Rob Roy had assumed his mother's name of "Campbell" in addition to his own, and Argyll hailed him as a kinsman by adoption, and welcomed him as one of his clan. This effusive interest in his welfare by an ancient enemy was looked upon with distrust by Rob

Roy. He could not at once forget that the Campbells had supplanted his own race everywhere by unfair means; that they had remorselessly hunted his forbears from place to place, and seized upon their possessions; and that Breadalbane, Argyll's near relative, had taken an active part in the massacre of Glencoe, which had brought grief to many a Highland home. He rejected, therefore, the overtures of Argyll with firmness and spirit, electing rather to follow a peaceful life with Montrose as his patron and friend.

But an accident soon occurred which exposed all the treachery of Montrose to Rob Roy. The two Dukes could no longer continue as rivals; both felt that one or other must fall. Argyll had paltered with the Jacobite party, and Montrose saw that if he could convict him of this treason his time of Court-favour would be ended. Knowing the intimacy which Rob Roy had maintained with the leaders of the movement, he wrote offering that if Macgregor could give him proof of Argyll's connection with the rebels he would cancel his debt, and restore his property to him. The bribe was a tempting one, and quite within Rob's power, but he rejected it with disdain; and to warn Argyll of his danger he forwarded the letter in which the base proposal was made to the party most interested. The result was that Argyll laid the whole case before the Court, and accused Montrose of seeking to stir up strife in Scotland, hoping thus to turn his rival's weapons against himself. But the English Court could not afford to quarrel with either of these noblemen at this critical period, and the matter went no further so far as they were concerned.

With Rob Roy, however, it was far otherwise. By the elaborate plot which we have described, Montrose had brought him within his power; and, as Macgregor had refused to perform the treacherous service which he required, the Duke proceeded to execute vengeance against him. The method which he took of gratifying his revenge was both

heartless and unjust. Whilst Rob was in the north of England busily employed in collecting such debts as were due to him that he might repay Montrose and redeem his land, Græme of Killearn received instructions to evict the family of Macgregor from their home and take possession of their property. He performed his mission with scrupulous faithfulness. Proceeding to Balquidder with an armed force, he laid violent hands upon the gear of the absent Laird, wantonly destroyed some portions of his dwelling, and turned the inoffending wife of Macgregor with her helpless children out of doors to wander disconsolately upon the lands which belonged by right to her. The traditions of the country relate that she suffered at his hands the extreme indignities which woman can endure, and that this was the true reason why her husband retained his enmity towards Græme during his life; but upon this point it is impossible to speak with confidence. Even without this outrage, the severity with which she was treated and the barbarity that her enemies displayed in turning her adrift in the world in midwinter, and in a spot so far removed from her kindred, were enough to have awakened the resentment of the mildest-mannered man.

The fiery Highland chief returned to Balquidder elated with the success of his journey, and overjoyed that he was now able to regain his estate and defy his oppressor. He knew that it would have been vain for him to have fought against the extortions of Montrose in the Courts of Law, and he had determined quietly to submit to his impositions lest worse should befall him. With what feelings of grief and rage was his bosom filled when he came back to find his homestead laid desolate, the sanctity of his hearth violated, and his family cast abroad into the world and dispersed he knew not whither. He had toiled and striven to avoid such a catastrophe, and even till then had comforted himself with the thought that his patient industry had enabled him to prevent its ever occurring; but the very moment of his triumph had become

filled with disaster and defeat. Is it wonderful that in that hour of sorrow and of indignation, while gazing upon his ruined home, with its "waste chambers, tenantless," he vowed to be revenged upon the man who had devised and the tools who had executed this outrage? In the first torrent of his anger, even whilst unaware of the extent of the barbarities practised against him, he swore by all he held sacred to wreak vengeance upon his ruthless enemies. The wrongs which his forefathers had endured had formerly awakened his resentment, but now that oppression had touched himself "where the heart most exquisitely feels," his suppressed indignation burst forth into fury. He had reached one of the turning-points in his career.

CHAPTER VIII.

"ROB ROY'S LAMENT."

"Farewell hours that late did measure
Sunshine days of joy and pleasure ;
Hail thou gloomy night of sorrow,
Cheerless night that knows no morrow.

O'er the past too fondly wandering,
On the hopeless future pondering,
Chilly Grief my life-blood freezes,
Fell Despair my fancy seizes."—*Burns.*

The unfortunate Mary Macgregor, after her forcible expulsion from her home, had wandered disconsolately away from the locality, not knowing whither to direct her steps. Instinctively she took the northward direction, believing that there would be more security for her and her babes amid the barren Highland hills than in the fertile valleys of Stirlingshire. She dared not approach the shores of Loch Lomond, lest the oppressor should follow her there to renew his barbarities, so she decided to cast herself upon the charity of the Campbells and trust to their generosity. The project was a bold one. She was herself, both by birth and marriage, a member of the persecuted Clan Gregor, whom the Campbells had striven to suppress ; and the children that she had with her were the heirs of the chieftainship of the race that they had sought for centuries to extirpate. Yet, confident that her misfortune would secure her protection even where wrongs done to her might remain unavenged, she took the way towards Glenorchay.

The road was a dreary one at any time, but she had never traversed it with a heavier heart than now. The snow lay in deep wreaths all around her, chilling by its glistening purity the weary wayfarer. Passing the kirkyard of Balquidder—the spot where in after years they were to rest from their labours—the Macgregors skirted the base of the towering

mountains which frowned in cheerless solitude above them, and followed the pathway which led to the ancient home of their fathers. Many a time would the hapless mother pause to rest beneath some overhanging cliff whose projecting mass secured her from the snow-drift, and gather her children to her breast to still their clamours, and strive to cheer them, though herself so forlorn and heart-broken. The past she dared not think of now, and the future lay darkly shrouded in mystery before her. She had taken her way into the wilderness, and when she could no longer retrace her steps the hardihood of her proceeding was revealed to her. How could she tell in what manner the ancient enemies of her house would receive her? Would they believe her tale, or, believing, would they not rejoice over it, well pleased that her misfortunes had placed her children—the hope of her clan—in their hands? These were the thoughts that coursed through her mind as she wended her weary way around the foot of Ben-Mohr, faith and hope alternating in her breast with doubt and despair.

" And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And cherished wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long."

The Celtic heart most naturally relieves itself of its weight of woe in song ; and it was in these circumstances and in this spot—with the swollen river at her feet and the snow-capped peak above her, with the darksome glen before, and the lochs and braes around yon desolated and memory-haunted home behind her—that she broke forth into that wildly pathetic strain of music which has charmed many a heart since, and is still remembered as "Rob Roy's Lament." Few, perchance, have known, when listening to the weird notes of this plaintive lay, the bitter anguish to which it gave expression, or have thought of the extent of the grief which first called it forth to waken the dismal echoes of that mountain solitude, and to

be borne away upon the wings of the wintry blast. The "Lament" is not so well known now as it once was, since it has been supplanted by the fictitious woe which expresses itself in carefully-framed Italian musical phrases; so we have ventured to reproduce the melody for our readers, that they may judge of its natural beauty. We look upon it as a proof of the poet's theory that

"Most wretched men
Are cradled into poetry by wrong;
The learn in suffering what they teach in song."

Very slowly.



Da Capo.

Fare ye weel, my ain Balquidder,
Fare ye weel, loch Lomond fair,
Green Craigrostan, dark Glenfalloch,
I maun never see ye mair !

Though the road be lang and dreary,
 Though the norlan’ blast may blaw,
 Down the glen, baith faint an’ weary,
 I maun wander far awa’.

Oh ! gin he were noo beside me,
 I wad heed nor aleet nor snaw ;
 But what fate will here betide me
 While frae me he’s far awa’.

Fare ye weel, sweet hame o’ gladness,
 Aince sae dear to mine an’ me ;
 Wintry days bring dule an’ sadness,
 An’ my weird I noo maun dree !

The longest road must have a termination, and at last Rob Roy’s wife arrived at Glenorchay. She was received there by some of the cottars with that tenderness which trouble ever calls forth spontaneously amongst the poor ; but it was impossible for the villagers to afford her shelter without the permission of their chief, and he was then at Balloch (now Taymouth) Castle. The restrictive measures which made it penal to afford “ house or harbourie ” to any of the Clan Gregor had been revived in full force, and the Campbells in Glenorchay did not know how their chief would regard the charity bestowed upon the wife of the head of that clan. She was compelled, therefore, to move onwards from Glenorchay, and to traverse the wild district which lies betwixt it and Loch Tay in the midst of the bitterest of wintry weather, and burdened with the care of her hapless children. Even Breadalbane—the man who had been mainly concerned in the Massacre of Glencoe—could not resist the potent eloquence of her misery, and extended his protection to her, in memory of his former friendship with her absent husband. He directed that she should receive such shelter and support as she required until Rob Roy returned to avenge her injuries.

Before instructing Græme of Killearn to proceed to extremities with the property of the Laird of Craigrostan, Montrose had been careful to give his action the appearance of legality. Since Rob had refused to assist him against

Argyll he determined to wreak his vengeance upon him, and the simplest way which he could adopt to accomplish his design was to procure Macgregor's outlawry. This he did by an unscrupulous use of the documents which he had in his possession. Whilst the unsuspecting chief was away in the north of England endeavouring to procure, as we have related, the money to satisfy the Duke's demands, he was sued in the Court of Edinburgh upon those bills, portions of which he had already paid, and, in accordance with the strict laws of the time, he was outlawed for non-appearance, and declared to be "notour bankrupt." Taking advantage of the fact that Rob Roy maintained a band of his clansmen for the protection of his clients who paid him black-mail, Montrose laid such information against him as made it appear that he was acting the part of a rebel, and treating the authority of the Crown with contempt. By these representations he induced the Lord Advocate, Sir James Steuart, to issue a warrant for the apprehension of Rob Roy, sufficiently wide to admit of his destroying the man who had refused to become the instrument of his villany. This document is most interesting, as affording proof of the sinister designs of Montrose, and we quote it in full to show his perfidy.

"BY HER MAJESTY'S ADVOCATE.

These are to require and warrant you to sease and apprehend the person of Robert Campbell, alias Rob Roy M'Gregor of Innersnait, a notorious bankrupt, and who by open fraud and violence hath embezzled considerable sums of money, refusing to come to any account, or subject himself to ane tryal or diligence, but keeping himself with a Guard or Company of armed men in defiance of the law, conform to a written information exhibit to me thereanent, and that you secure him in the next sure prison in order to his trial.

Given at Edinburgh the third day of October, 1712.

JA. STEUART

To all Her Majesty's Officers of the Law whom they may concern."

When executing the commands of the Duke, his master, Græme of Killearn imagined that this paper gave him license to commit any atrocity, and the outlawry of Macgregor he believed would prevent him from being called to account when the chief returned. He did not know how much a desperate man will do.

Thus by one stroke Rob Roy found himself bereft of his home, his goods, and his family, outlawed for the crime of another man, and made the victim of his own trustfulness. The action which Montrose had taken could not but convince him that he had become his enemy, and despised all that Rob could do in retaliation. And it was in the mood of mind which these thoughts had called forth that he discovered his wife and children, sheltered and cared for by one whom he had lately looked upon as a foe, and whose overtures to him in the interests of Argyll he had scornfully rejected. It is no marvel that, in these circumstances, he decided to espouse the cause of the Campbells, and to renounce for ever his allegiance to the Grahams, who had proved untrue to him.

It is not our purpose to transform Rob Roy into a hero of romance, or to invest him with attributes to which he can lay no claim. We do not defend the lawless course which he adopted after this critical point in his history, nor seek to excuse him from the judgment of posterity upon his deeds. But we think that the position in which he was placed by those in whom he trusted, the outrages which he had endured, and the penalties of the law which had been undeservedly denounced against him, altered his character into that form which it afterwards assumed. He became morose, sullen, almost vindictive in his revenge; all notions of justice towards his oppressors were abandoned, for he believed that no reprisal could ever compensate for the wrongs which he had suffered; and he gave way to the wilder passions of his nature, and determined to merit the outlawry which had been pronounced against him.

Accepting the protection which Breadalbane offered, he gathered the remnants of that band which had formerly been associated with him, and began a series of raids upon the property of the Duke of Montrose in Stirlingshire. He assumed full command of the entire Clan of Macgregors, and summoned the most desperate men amongst them to his standard. Nor did he exclude the fugitives from other clans whose deeds had placed them beyond the protection of the law; and thus he soon found himself at the head of nearly three hundred men obedient to his slightest wish, and ready to perform any task which he might propose to them. It would be difficult to imagine a more dangerous position for one in his then state of mind to occupy.

Though his residence in the district of Breadalbane was nominally one of sufferance merely, it would be idle to suppose that Argyll and his relative gave him no countenance in his forays upon the property of their mutual enemy, Montrose. Argyll was still trembling in the balance betwixt the Jacobites and the reigning sovereign, and it suited his plans admirably to retain one whom outrage had driven to oppose the most powerful of the other side. Thus the lawless cattle-liftings and harrings in which Rob Roy indulged served a double end—they showed that Montrose was not able to defend his own property, and was therefore not to be trusted with the affairs of the nation; and at the same time they might increase Argyll's importance, since he could terminate them, if he chose, without difficulty. And in this manner, almost unconsciously, Rob Roy was elevated into political importance, and became a man of mark amongst his contemporaries.

His extensive knowledge of all the land upon the Highland Border enabled him to elude pursuit in circumstances which would otherwise have been fatal, and the rapidity of his movements and secrecy of his operations soon made his name the dread of all who had offended him. The countless hiding-places which he had established through the country

that lies betwixt the shores of Loch Lomond and the Lake of Menteith were invaluable to him, for by the judicious use of these he could place his pursuers at defiance. And by persistence in this course he became wealthy as Montrose grew poorer, and waxed bolder in his raids as he found his enemies more timorous. The industrious grazier had at length thrown off the trammels that confined him, and developed into the outlaw, made desperate by his situation, and reckless of all the restraints which civilisation imposes.

His deeds were not suffered to pass without attempted reprisals on the part of Montrose. The house and lands of Craigrostan were seized by that nobleman's myrmidons, and, though Rob Roy had a rendezvous but a short distance from the place, he found it impossible for a long time to dislodge his enemies. The annoyance which he caused them, however, became so intolerable latterly that the Duke made representations to the Government regarding him, and persuaded them to arrange for the erection of a fort at Inversnaid, upon the very ground from which Rob took his territorial title. The ruse by which this fort came into Macgregor's own hands may give some idea of his style of warfare.

The Government decided to protect the fields of Loch Lomond side from the incursions of the Macgregors by building a station-fort on Inversnaid which would overawe them, and might at the same time prove useful to restrain the encroachments of Argyll. They contracted, therefore, with one Nasmyth, a builder in Edinburgh (grandfather of Alexander Nasmyth, the eminent landscape painter), that he should erect and complete a fort of sufficient dimensions to accomplish the end in view, and he proceeded at once with the work. To expedite the building, the contractor sent a large number of men to the place at first, and the walls rapidly rose above the level of the surrounding ground. It was late in the season before operations had been begun, and the snows of winter had commenced to fall ere the work of the builders was com-

pleted. Despite the inclemency of the weather, however, they had at last finished their task, and their employer had undertaken the arduous journey from Edinburgh to inspect the work before handing it over to the Government. The day of his arrival had been extremely bleak and cold, and as night set in a heavy snowstorm began, and soon covered the country with its stainless sheet of virgin purity. Only the few workmen still necessary to complete the work remained at the fort, and their employer thought to spend the night with them beneath its roof. As the hours sped the storm increased in fury, and whilst the inmates cowered around the fire which they had kindled in one of the chambers they heard the voice, amid the pauses of the blast, of one seeking protection from the raging elements. They could not on such a night leave any fellow-creature to "bide the pelting of the pitiless storm" whilst they had shelter to afford, and Nasmyth directed that the door should be opened to admit the belated wayfarer. No sooner had the outer gate been unbarred than a band of wild Highlanders with Rob Roy at their head rushed into the fort brandishing their claymores, and threatening death to all who should resist them. The workmen, unprepared for such an emergency, were forced to yield themselves prisoners, and they were instantly seized and bound by their assailants. Leaving a detachment to retain the fort in case of surprise, Rob marched his helpless captives through the snow, leading them by secret paths towards Craigrostan, which was then occupied by some of Montrose's retainers. When they reached the plantation at some little distance from the house Rob Roy dismissed the unfortunate builders and their employer, exacting a solemn promise from them that they would never more return to the country of the Macgregors.

By this daring act Rob Roy obtained a vantage ground from which he could carry on his predatory operations against Montrose. It was his purpose to regain possession of Craigrostan, which Montrose had seized, and the fort at

Inversnaid enabled him to menace it continually. It is not likely that Macgregor intended to harm the unhappy contractor, Nasmyth, although this exploit really resulted in his ruin and death. He had bargained with the Government to complete the fort within a given time under heavy penalties, and, as he never was able to hand it over to them, they exacted from him the uttermost farthing, thus reducing him to destitution. The severities to which he had been subjected upon the fatal night of his expedition had seriously affected his health, and a few months afterwards he sank into a premature grave. Rob Roy did not usually war against any save those who had injured him, and he probably thought that the Government alone would suffer in the matter. He had only sought to obtain the castle which his enemies had erected upon his own land ; and had thus realised the proverb that “ Fools build houses, and wise men inhabit them.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE QUEEN'S MESSENGER.

“Come, lay down thy clouted cloke,
And do not longer stand,
And loose the strings of all thy pokes,
I'll rype them with my hand.”
—*The Ballad of Robin Hood.*

The possession of the Fort at Inversnaid gave Rob Roy the command of the whole surrounding district. Its position was peculiarly favourable, since from it he could direct his operations against Montrose either by land or from the waters of the Loch; and, if hard pressed, he had the option of escaping from his assailants by Loch Lomond or through the passes of Glengyle, then in the hands of his nephew. Especially was this fort of value to him by enabling him gradually to regain the cattle on the lands of Craigrostan, which Montrose had laid violent hands on. But though useful to him as a military outpost, he could never venture to make it his home, and he was compelled to leave his wife and children under the care of Breadalbane, whilst he prosecuted his raids upon his inveterate enemy Montrose.

No conscientious scruples restrained him from executing vengeance upon that nobleman for the misery which he had inflicted upon him; and the Duke soon discovered that his conduct towards Rob Roy had not only lost a friend to him, but had also raised up a formidable foe. Every kind of property belonging to him was laid under tribute, and his stores were pillaged to afford sustenance to the wild followers of the man whom he had so deeply injured. The utmost efforts of Montrose to capture Rob Roy, though assisted in a half-hearted manner by the Government, were quite unavailing; and every insult and wrong which he had done him was

dearly avenged. The rapidity with which Macgregor shifted his point of attack, and the silence and secrecy which attended every exploit, reduced Montrose to his wits' end, and, as he knew not where to anticipate a foray, he was forced to submit to the spoliation which he was helpless to prevent.

For some time Rob Roy restricted his warfare with Montrose merely to lifting his cattle and confiscating his grain; but the impunity with which he escaped from the Duke's vigilance at length tempted him to employ another method of attack. He had been in the habit of notifying Montrose when he took stores of any description from his home farm that they were "for the use of Rob Roy," and his success in this way led him to attempt to wound him in his purse—a spot where Montrose was extremely sensitive. The plan he adopted was a bold one, and succeeded because of its very audacity.

The lands of Montrose stretched southwards from the Braes of Balquidder to Campsie Fells, and comprised some of the richest country in Stirlingshire, nearly all arable lands, and producing a good revenue to him from their rental. But the very extent of his estate made it difficult for him to protect it in these troublous times; and neither Buchanan House nor Mugdock Castle, his two places of residence, could secure his tenants from the active operations of the Macgregors. Justly, or otherwise, the Duke had the reputation of being a hard and avaricious landlord, and his tenants, afraid to trust to a generosity whose existence they doubted, were particularly careful to be ready with their rent against the term when it fell due. The character of his chief factor, Græme of Killearn—a second cousin of his own—we have already discovered from his dealings with Rob Roy, and doubtless the subordinates whom he employed moulded their conduct upon his. But Rob determined by one bold stroke to surprise and defeat them all.

Assembling his men at Inversnaid, he divided them into

small parties of five and six, and dispatched them to the farms of the principal tenants upon the estates of Montrose. The instructions which he gave them were precise, and they were faithfully carried out by his devoted adherents. The rent-day was at hand, and he had decided to collect the revenue of the Duke from this source at the point of the sword. His trusty followers, fully armed and equipped in Highland fashion, entered the steadings of the farmers and compelled them by threats of violence to deliver up the hard-won earnings which they had laid past as the rent of their lands. The dreaded name of Macgregor terrified them into compliance with these demands; and the clansmen returned to Inversnaid laden with treasure. As it was not Rob's desire to injure the farmers themselves, he had arranged that receipts should in every case be given to them in exchange for their money; and these papers bore that the rents had been lifted, "on account of Montrose," by Rob Roy Macgregor. These descents upon the farmers had been carefully timed and executed simultaneously, and thus, when Græme of Killearn sent his myrmidons two days afterwards to collect the rents of His Grace, he found that he had been forestalled, and that his enemy had triumphed over him.

The Macgregors had carefully refrained from molesting any of the poor tenants under Montrose, partly from commiseration, and partly because the large farmers afforded easily-won plunder; but Græme, incensed at the trick which had been played upon him, expended his impotent wrath upon the unfortunate crofters who had escaped unharmed from the Highlanders. Unlike the larger farmers, these minor tenants depended for their existence upon the produce of each season as it passed over them, and one unsuccessful harvest threw them easily into arrears. Against them, therefore, the unscrupulous factor proceeded with extreme rigour; though Rob Roy managed to overturn his plans and circumvent him here in a most unlooked-for manner.

There was a certain widow who occupied a small piece of land near Balfour which she rented from Montrose, and by the cultivation of which she strove to eke out a precarious livelihood. But the season had been against her, and evil-fortune and mishap had falsified her calculations so seriously that as the term approached she discovered that she had not the wherewithal to satisfy the demands of her stringent and unsympathetic landlord. She knew that she had little mercy to expect from Græme, and she saw nothing before her but ruin and desolation for herself and her fatherless children. For years she had struggled bravely against the tide of adversity, but the strength of the boldest swimmer will fail at last, and hope will sink within the stoutest heart as the waves of misfortune roll remorselessly over its unhappy victim. And to an independent Scottish heart there is no task so bitter as the forced confession of defeat in the great battle for existence.

While in this extremity she suddenly remembered that she could claim the gratitude of Rob Roy. We cannot ascertain upon what ground she believed him to be her debtor; whether she had herself befriended him in some serious dilemma, or whether some service performed for him by her deceased husband entitled her to consideration cannot now be discovered; but she determined to convey intelligence to him of the straits to which she was reduced, and to beseech his aid "for auld lang syne."

Roy Roy was not the man to refuse such a request. Since he had been forced to fling off the trammels of commercial life he had become a kind of Scottish Robin Hood, seeking to right the wrongs of the poor, abasing the proud, and exalting the humble, and this widow's case appealed especially to him. Taking a few of his followers with him he went in person to see her. He found that Græme had already taken legal proceedings against her, and that on the following morning her scanty store was to be seized by his agents and carried away

to satisfy his demands. No time could be lost in this matter, and Rob Roy at once decided upon his course of action. Having learned the amount of her indebtedness he handed to her sufficient money to liquidate the claim against her, strictly enjoining that she should procure a receipt in full from Græme's agents when she made payment to them.

Ere the servants of Montrose, clothed with their "brief authority," had appeared on the succeeding day, Rob Roy had withdrawn from the widow's house with his men, and occupied a position from which he could survey the proceedings. He saw them enter her dwelling, prepared to execute the commands of their superior with vigour; and he witnessed their withdrawal from her abode after having obtained, as he rightly judged, the satisfaction which he had provided for their claims. His men were skilfully placed in ambuscade within a fir-tree plantation through which the road passed, and the servants of Montrose, unsuspecting of their proximity, calmly walked into the snare prepared for them. When they reached the spot the Macgregors sprang forth at a signal from their leader, and surrounded them. Resistance was impossible, and to save their lives they delivered up the money they had received, thankful to escape upon such easy terms. By this daring deed he succeeded in thwarting the purposes of Montrose without expense to himself, whilst he conferred a favour upon one to whom he was under obligation.

It may easily be supposed that Rob Roy's conduct kindled the wrath of Græme of Killearn against him, and he sought every opportunity to overthrow the man whose wit and ingenuity, as well as his reckless courage, had wrought him so much trouble and vexation. The ancient proverb declares that "the offender never forgives his victim," and Græme sought for an excuse for his harshness towards Rob Roy in the retributive actions which that very conduct had called forth. He had found that to attempt the apprehension of Rob Roy under the pretext of a civil action, which declared him

bankrupt, was a hopeless task, so he determined to secure his destruction upon the ground of his political opinions.

The position of affairs at this period favoured his design, and as Montrose was now high in office at Court there could be little difficulty in awakening the fears of the ruling party against him. Rob Roy's leaning towards the Jacobites was notorious, and many of his associates had committed themselves to the support of the cause by secret bonds amongst themselves. Some years before this time, whilst Breadalbane was still undecided as to which party he should choose, a great meeting of Highland chiefs had been held at Glen-Rannoch, ostensibly as a hunting party, but in reality as a method of discovering the sentiments with which the Highlanders regarded the claims of the exiled King. Many of the more powerful chiefs declared enthusiastically in favour of King James, and a bond of union amongst them in defence of his rights was drawn up and signed by the most prominent leaders. As the representative of the Macgregors—a clan whose numbers and courage made them members of importance in any rebellion—Rob Roy had been summoned to this meeting, and, in common with many others, he subscribed his name to the bond which pledged them all to attempt the restoration of the legitimate sovereign to the throne. This important document was entrusted to one of their number that it might be forwarded to the King at St Germain.

But as time progressed and the prospects of the Jacobites seemed to grow less hopeful, Breadalbane, who had coquetted with the Whigs until he had secured the promise of preferment, suddenly broke with his former associates and declared for the Government. To his concern in the Massacre of Glencoe we have already alluded, and there is little doubt that his trimming policy prevented a successful rising during the life of William III. His treacherous conduct awakened the fears of the Highland chiefs who had signed the bond, and anxious inquiries were made as to its whereabouts. With dismay t

Jacobites learned that through the carelessness of him to whom it had been entrusted it had never reached its destination, but had fallen into the hands of Campbell of Glenlyon—the very man who had committed the massacre of the Macdonalds under circumstances of peculiar atrocity. Their feelings of indignation against him for his share in that deed had been freely expressed, and it was not likely that one of his morose and sanguinary disposition would hesitate to take bitter revenge upon his accusers. It became necessary, therefore, that immediate steps should be taken to recover this dangerous document out of his hands.

A meeting of those concerned was hastily summoned to consider what measures should be adopted, and, as Rob Roy was related to Campbell of Glenlyon, he was deputed to call on him and endeavour to obtain the bond upon which their lives depended. Though personally careless as to what the Government might do against him, Rob consented to execute this commission; and, taking only a few of his most faithful followers with him, he set out for Fort-William, where Campbell was then on duty.

Meanwhile Montrose had heard from some of his spies of the existence of this compromising bond, and through his willing agent, Græme, had communicated with Campbell regarding it. The rewards which he offered to its possessor may have had little influence upon him, but the opportunity thus given him to avenge the insults and execrations which had been heaped upon him was too tempting for Campbell to resist. He consented to forward the fatal bond to the Privy Council by the hands of the Governor of Fort-William, and thus deliver his enemies into the hands of the Government. When Rob Roy, therefore, obtained an interview with him it was only to find that the bond was no longer in Campbell's power, that he was committed beyond recall, and that he could not regain possession of the document even if he had been willing to alter his determination regarding it.

Affairs had assumed a critical aspect, and, though Rob cared little as to what should befall himself, he did not wish to return to his associates without accomplishing his purpose. By skilful questioning he discovered that Governor Hill was preparing dispatches for Edinburgh which were to be sent off in a few days, and that it was probable that the document he was in quest of would be amongst them. He departed with all speed southwards to make arrangements for its interception.

The disturbed state of the Highlands rendered it necessary to forward all State Papers under a strong guard, lest they should fall into the wrong hands; and Governor Hill had ordered an ensign's command to accompany the important dispatches which he was sending on this occasion. The party set forward for Edinburgh, but as the roads were almost impassable, their progress was slow and tedious. On the third day they had arrived at Glendochart, and were already weary of their task, when they met with an unexpected interruption. They had reached a narrow pass through which the road wound, and had with difficulty threaded their way by rock and stream, compelled by the nature of the ground to proceed in single file. Even had they anticipated an attack, their position would have been indefensible; and when Rob Roy, with fifty of his bravest clansmen, suddenly appeared in front of them, their leader saw at once that it would be vain to attempt resistance. Rob did not wish to injure them, and assured them that they would be perfectly safe from harm, provided they delivered up the dispatches of which they had charge.

The ensign demurred to this request at first, but the resolute appearance of Macgregor, and the evident danger in which his party was placed, at length forced him to agree to Rob's proposal, and to place the papers which he carried in the chieftain's hands. With scrupulous delicacy Rob examined the documents, and selecting from amongst them the paper which most concerned him, he restored the others to their

custodier, and, apologising with mock courtesy for the trouble which he had occasioned him, wished him a good journey, and withdrew his men, that the officer might pursue his route towards the capital. Somewhat crestfallen at the treatment which he had received, the ensign proceeded on his way, thankful that he had preserved the lives of himself and his men, though at the expense of his honour. The hardihood of Rob Roy thus saved some of the noblest of the Highland chiefs from the scaffold, and made it possible for them to attempt that rising in 1715 in which he played no unimportant part. But the deed—technically described in old Statutes as “ombesetting the gait of the Queen’s Majestie’s Messenger”—was considered specially heinous; and the success which had attended it only served to make Rob Roy’s enemies still more incensed against him.

CHAPTER X.

THE CROSS OF CRIEFF.

Bobadil—"But that (of all others) was the most fatal and dangerous exploit that ever I was ranged in, since I first bore arms before the face of an enemy, as I am a gentleman and a soldier."

—"Every Man in his Humour"—*Ben Jonson.*

Even had his own feelings not led Rob Roy to espouse the cause of the Pretender at this time, the hostile demonstrations against established authority which he had lately made would have almost compelled him to declare for King James. He had certainly received little encouragement from the Whig party as represented by Montrose; and he was sufficiently intelligent to understand that both Argyll and Breadalbane merely tolerated him, and would not scruple to sacrifice him should their interests demand his removal. But the condition of the Highland clans in the north, and the spirit of devotion to the Stuart cause which still lingered amongst them, encouraged him in his adherence to the exiled family. Believing that the country was on the verge of a revolution which could not fail to reinstate the rightful King upon the throne of Scotland, Rob Roy compromised himself still further by open declaration of his Jacobite sentiments.

It is easy for us, with all the light which after-events throw upon this period, to condemn the blinded loyalty which led the Highlanders to engage in the hopeless conflict which ensued; but we should remember the sad condition of the country, the imperfect means by which communication was sustained between the conspirators, and the utter lack of confidence which existed betwixt clans who were hereditary enemies, and who were thus banded together for the support of a dynasty which had given few proofs of clemency or tenderness towards them. The perfidy of some of the Highland chiefs towards each other, and the imbecility of the Earl of Mar, their chosen leader, would have wrecked a fairer

cause than that which called forth the chivalry of the North in 1715.

Of the inner workings of the Jacobite plots, however, Rob Roy, in common with the majority of his compatriots, had but slight knowledge, nor did he greatly concern himself therewith. He knew that the Campbells, of whom Argyll was the head, had been the enemies of his clan for centuries, and he had already dearly experienced the resentment of Montrose in his own person and family. These facts would probably have no slight power in leading him to take up a political profession which opposed him to both of the Dukes. He had been thrown out of the peaceful occupation which he had chosen, and driven to adopt a kind of guerilla warfare against his enemies which made him reckless of consequences. The treatment which the clans had received from William of Orange and from the Ministers of Queen Anne gave him little hope of either justice or mercy at the hands of those whom he looked upon as usurpers.

The disaffection in the Highlands of Scotland became most intense after the death of Queen Anne, on the 30th of July 1714. With her the direct descent from James VI., by the male branch, terminated ; and the adherents of the Stuart line considered her demise as affording them a favourable opportunity for a demonstration against the House of Hanover. The Act of Settlement which had been passed in 1701 provided that upon the decease of the Princess (afterwards Queen) Anne without issue the Crown should revert to the descendants of the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James VI., whose male representative was then George, the Elector of Hanover. By this arrangement James VII. and his son—known afterwards as the Pretender—were both passed over and excluded ; and, though this limitation might not appear as a great grievance whilst the daughters of the deposed King—Mary and Anne—were upon the throne, it seemed especially strange when the course of events called George of

Hanover to rule over Great Britain. Ere Queen Anne departed this life she buried her husband and her nineteen children ; and nothing remained but to summon the Elector of Hanover as King by the title of George I. This time of transition was considered an appropriate one for the revival of the Jacobite fervour.

It must not be supposed that those who declared for the Pretender were building their hopes of his restoration upon a false or insecure basis. When James VII. died in 1701, the King of France, Louis XIV., one of the most formidable enemies of England, had publicly recognised the young Prince as James VIII. of Scotland and III. of Great Britain, and had contributed munificently towards his support whilst exiled in France. The connection betwixt Scotland and France had from time immemorial been very intimate, and no other Continental power could menace England with the same effect. The Scottish Jacobites, therefore, trusted much to their Southern allies, and expected some action to follow the good-wishes so profusely lavished upon them. And many patriotic Englishmen who had tolerated William of Orange because of his double relationship to the throne (he was grandson of Charles I., and son-in-law of James II.), hesitated to swear allegiance to a foreigner, who could only claim that James VI. was his great-grandfather by the female side. The Act of Settlement had not only debarred the children of James VII. from succeeding to the throne, but had also passed over the children of Henrietta, his sister (daughter of Charles I.), who had married the Duke of Orleans, brother of Louis XIV., and had thus slighted the claims of the royal house of Bourbon. Besides all these reasons, the Elector of Hanover was fifty-four years of age, and had not one spark of romance in his composition, at a time when romance was considered a proof of gentility. It is not wonderful that the Highlanders of Scotland declared for the exiled Prince whose misfortunes had touched their hearts, rather than for the phlegmatic and

commonplace "German Lairdie" who had been thrust upon them by Act of Parliament.

This was the situation of affairs after the death of Queen Anne—the Scottish nobles who had resisted the intrusion of William III. still more strenuously objected to George I.; and many of the trimming noblemen who had prevaricated during the reign of Anne joined with them in opposing the imposition of the Hanoverian dynasty. But dread of death or confiscation kept many from deciding until decision was impotent, and they supinely acquiesced in the existing state of things when their power to influence them was gone.

With the latter, however, Rob Roy had no sympathy. He had declared for James VII. at a very early period, and he determined to support his descendant as far as lay in his power. To analyse his motives would be futile. Since every philosopher finds it impossible to frame analyses of the motives which prompt to actions that come under his own observation, we may be excused from attempting an explanation of conduct which occurred nearly two hundred years ago. The exposition of the state of affairs at this crisis which we have laid before the reader, though somewhat prolix, may enable him to follow the course of events, and to understand the historical episodes in which Rob Roy took part.

With such a band of daring mountaineers as Rob commanded it was possible to accomplish many bold deeds, and his determined character had developed into recklessness under the inhuman treatment which he had endured. No better opportunity for avenging himself upon the Whigamore Duke of Montrose could be desired than that afforded by the state of parties at the time, and he did not scruple to associate with the most lawless of the northern clans, that he might avenge his private wrongs, whilst testifying his loyalty to the Stuart family. One of his escapades, which took place towards the close of the year 1714, is worth relating, as showing the extent of his audacity. The story has not

hitherto been told, and we have unearthed it from amongst the papers of the Duke of Montrose, where several letters referring to this incident are still in existence.

From a very early period up to the year 1770 the town of Crieff was the central cattle-market where the northern drovers brought their flocks and herds from the pasture lands of the Highlands, and where the southern dealers congregated to purchase and dispose of them. The position of Crieff was exceptionally convenient for this purpose. Situated amongst the uplands of Perthshire, in a spot which from time immemorial has been used as a post for communication between the Highlands and the Lowlands, the ancient burgh had not been without a stirring history. All around it are still to be found unmistakeable evidences of Roman occupation; and, though there are few architectural remains to testify to its importance in later times, the records of the past preserved in the historical documents of the locality prove that it occupied an honoured place. It was considered as the Capital of Strathearn, and in early times the principal courts for administrating the affairs of the district were held there. The Stewards, Earls of Strathearn (now represented by the Duke of Atholl), dated many of their charters from the town of "Creff," and it retained its importance until the beginning of the sixteenth century. At that time the power of the Earls Palatine of Strathearn had become seriously limited, and in 1505 Parliament transferred the business which had formerly occupied the Stewards' Court of Strathearn to the city of Perth. From this period the burgh gradually declined, and, though it retained its position as the central cattle mart for the north, even of this claim to notice it was deprived when, in 1770, the Trysts were removed to Falkirk.

In 1714, however, Crieff was still the chief place of meeting for the drovers and dealers in cattle. There were eight market-days throughout the year, but the most important of them all was what was known as the "Michaelmas Tryst," which began,

according to the old style, upon the eleventh of October, and lasted for several days. As this fair was set apart for hiring as well as for cattle-dealing, a large number of Highlanders frequented it, either to seek employment with Lowland farmers, or to dispose of the "kyloes" which they had reared in their mountain-homes. Order was maintained during the fair by the Baron-bailie, who exercised almost arbitrary power whilst it continued; and it may be imagined that the moral influence of what was sarcastically called "the kind Gallows of Crieff" would exercise some restraint upon the wild Highlanders who frequented the place.

But the critical year to which we are now referring demanded more care for the preservation of the peace at Crieff than hitherto. George I. had ascended the throne in August, and at the very outset of his career had published a proclamation which seemed to indicate that he meant to rule by despotic means. The Scottish Whigs could not disguise their fears that the new turn which events had taken would rekindle the smouldering fires of Jacobite fervour in the north; and they dreaded that the Michaelmas gathering at Crieff, where so many of the turbulent Highlanders would assemble ostensibly for commercial purposes, might be turned into a meeting-place for the disaffected. The leading Whig Lords, therefore, arranged that a large body of troops should be sent by the Government to Crieff, lest the Jacobites should avail themselves of this opportunity for dealing a blow at the Hanoverians. These soldiers were quartered upon the burghesses, and directed to hold themselves in readiness to suppress any rising at its outset.

The fears of the Whigs were not without foundation. On the evening of the first day of the Tryst a party of Macdonalds had been regaling themselves behind a dyke in true Highland fashion, and the quaigh, which circulated as their "love-cup," was filled with usquebaugh which had never paid duty to the Hanoverian monarch. Whilst thus engaged, and

while the beaker circled amid many merry jests, doubtful stories, and disguised Jacobite toasts, the harmony of the company was suddenly disturbed by the intrusion of a gauger whose keen scent for contraband whisky had led him to the locality. The sight of an exciseman affects the Scottish Celt much in the same way as the appearance of a process-server stimulates his Irish brother—he is the symbol of an inconvenient authority, the incarnation of law, and, therefore, hateful to the lawless. Besides, this unfortunate gauger represented the usurping King, whom the Macdonalds despised, and he had foolishly presumed to interfere with their hilarity, and attempted to confiscate the liquor which had increased their enjoyment. Had he ventured upon similar insolence in the wilds of Glengarry or Sleat they could easily have dealt with him; but the presence of the Baron-bailie and Hanoverian soldiers in Crieff made them cautious. But that night they entered his chamber, cut off his right ear, and forced him to drink the health of King James, bareheaded and on his knees, and in a brimming quaigh of that very smuggled whisky which he had thought to seize. They then dispersed, and were soon indistinguishable amongst the moving Highlanders of their clan who frequented the Tryst.

The wrath of the Whigs was aroused by this escapade, and the soldiers were summoned out to assist the Baron-bailie in discovering the offenders; but their efforts were of no avail, and their want of success served to heap ridicule upon them. The Lord Advocate, Sir David Dalrymple of Hailes, wrote to the Duke of Montrose on December 25th, 1714, in these terms:—"An excise officer at Crieff had his ear cut off in bed by 10 or 12 armed men in disguise—certainly Jacobites; I think I will secure proof against one by offering the alternative of confession of this, or prosecution for declaring on the day of the King's Proclamation 'that His Majesty had no more right to the Crown than he had.'" Rob Roy was present in person at the Tryst, along with a chosen band of

his followers, and he determined still further to bring the helpless authorities into contempt. He secretly passed the word amongst his clansmen to assemble fully armed on one of the fields of Crieff upon the evening following the outrage, and be prepared to execute a daring jest at the expense of the Government.

The evening proved propitious for his purpose. The Macgregors had gathered silently at the appointed place of meeting, and when Rob Roy joined them he found himself at the head of thirty resolute clansmen, armed with dirk and claymore, and ready to execute his lightest command. As the bell of the ancient Parish Kirk of Crieff tolled the hour of midnight the chief formed his retainers into marching order, and, putting himself at the head of them, he led the way towards the burgh. The night was clear, and the moon shone brightly upon the glittering claymores and accoutrements of the little band of resolute warriors as they marched in silence through the deserted streets. Passing the very heart of the town, they directed their steps towards the Cross of Crieff, and arranged themselves in a circle around it. Though this stone Cross could claim no remote antiquity, it had a special significance to the Jacobites. Shortly before his enforced exile in 1688 James VII. had sanctioned the erection of Crieff into "the Burgh of Regality of Drummond," and the Cross, with its carved *fleur-de-lis* and coronet, had been placed in the midst of the town as an emblem of authority. The Whig Parliament, however, had refused to ratify this arrangement, and, though the Cross had been suffered to remain, it was only venerated by those who had Jacobite proclivities, and Rob Roy intended to make it the scene of a Tory triumph.

When his men ranged around the Cross, each with his quagh in one hand and his claymore in the other, Rob broached the keg of untaxed usquebaugh which had been brought with them, and when their cups were charged he called upon them to drink the health of "His Majesty King

James the Eighth" with all the honours. The ringing cheer which burst from them echoed through the silent streets of the old town, breaking the slumber of many a Whig burgher, and making the souls of the soldiers of King George uneasy with the dread of a new rebellion. Regardless of their danger, the Macgregors kept up their revelry for some time. They drank "Success to Tullibardine and confusion to Montrose," they toasted the Scottish nobles who sympathised with their cause, and imprecated the recreants who had acknowledged King William, the hero of "bloody Glencoe," nor did the meanest of their political enemies escape convivial condemnation.

Meanwhile the soldiers were beginning to muster in force, and, called from their billets by tuck of drum, were preparing to make a charge upon the rebels. Rob Roy had no intention that his joke should end in bloodshed, so he gave his men, as a final toast, "the health of those honest and brave felous cutt out the Gadger's ear." The exact words of this toast are thus preserved in a letter written by Haldane of Gleneagles, who was probably a spectator of the scene, to the Duke of Montrose. It is almost needless to say that it was responded to enthusiastically; and after this duty had been accomplished the Macgregors withdrew from their dangerous position, and marching rapidly beyond the bounds of the burgh they dispersed like true "children of the mist," and baffled the pursuit of their enemies. Their leader had succeeded in putting the vigilance of the Government troops at defiance; he had shown to the assembled Highland clans how much could be done by bold and fearless action, and he had once more publicly testified his adherence to the exiled Stuart family. And when Montrose received Haldane's letter, recounting Rob Roy's exploit, he might well give way to chagrin and vexation at the impotence of the armed forces of King George to curb and restrain the audacity of the bold outlaw. He was yet to experience still further the vengeance of Macgregor.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WADSET OF GLENGYLE.

“The Church is in ruins, the State is in jars;
Delusions, oppressions, and murderous wars;
We daurna weel say’t, though we ken wha’s to blame—
There’ll never be peace till Jamie comes hame!”—*Burns.*

No action which the Whigs had ever taken had served to bring their name so much into disrepute as their trafficking with England for the Union of the Parliaments. Though the crown of a United Kingdom had been placed on the head of James VI., the independence of Scotland had been maintained during the century succeeding his ascension; and the Kings who ruled had a kind of dual existence, since each half of their kingdom legislated for itself. But it is easy to conceive how this state of matters would become irksome to the rulers, and prompt them to devise schemes for the transference of administration to the southern metropolis. Their efforts, however, had been strenuously resisted; and Scotland preserved at least the appearance of a self-contained kingdom until 1707. In that year the arrangements for buying over the dominant party were completed, and on the 25th of March the ancient Scots Parliament—that august body which had advised the kings and administered the affairs of the nation for centuries—dissolved, never to meet again.

It was natural that the Tories should take full advantage of the opportunity which this disreputable affair gave them for abusing their enemies. They forgot that the kings whom they supported had been the originators of the movement; and they made much of the mysterious “Equivalent” whereby the venal members had been bribed to accomplish it. Their arguments were all-powerful, especially with the unlettered

Highlanders; and the devotion of the Chiefs was secured by the promise that "the King" would restore their ancient liberties when once they had placed him securely upon the throne. Many of those who had little sympathy with the Stuart cause strongly reprobated the Union, and addresses to the Throne petitioning for its repeal were freely circulated and numerous signed during the year 1714. Disaffection was thus spread rapidly amongst those who might have remained faithful subjects; and the stern repression which they met at the hands of the Government drove many loyal Scotchmen into the very midst of the rebellion which was brewing.

There had been continual rumours afloat for some time of the immediate landing of King James VIII. with succour from the French Court. The excitement throughout Scotland became intense; and Rob Roy's exploit at the Cross of Crieff, which was noised abroad, called forth a host of imitators. The great cattle-fair was held at Falkirk in December—a short time after Rob's escapade—and three Tory noblemen with their servants violently attacked all and sundry as they retired from the market, and forced them by blows to kneel and pray for King James the Eighth, and to curse King George and his supporters. Edinburgh became a very hotbed of disaffection, and it was soon found to be impossible to arrest and punish those who publicly drank the health of the absent King. This was the state of affairs in Scotland as the year closed, and the fatal 1715 opened with every prospect in favour of the Stuart dynasty.

In a private letter from Charles Cokburn, son of the Lord Justice-Clerk, to the Duke of Montrose, dated 29th January 1715, it is stated that "the Jacobites are very uppish, and great things adoeing among them in the Highlands." Rob Roy had been especially active, and, though the Duke of Argyll was now looked upon as the only Whig who could "manage the clans," he had not yet thrown off Macgregor. The services which Rob Roy had already rendered had pro-

cured the notice of royalty, and a Colonel's commission was sent to him as an acknowledgment of them. He redoubled his exertions for the advancement of the Cause, enlisting troops from amongst the "broken men" who were wandering over the country, and preparing for the arrival of King James.

That monarch, however, with the weakness and indecision too often exhibited by his race, was frittering away the golden opportunity which had been offered to him. Void of personal courage, and the enslaved victim of pusillanimous fear, James was entirely unfitted to lead an army to victory, even under the most favourable circumstances, and he trembled so long at the thought of launching his frail bark upon the waters that the tide of fortune ebbed away from it, and left him helplessly upon the strand. He would not venture his stake upon the hazard, forgetful of the words of the "great Marquis" who had died for his King:—

" He either fears his fate too much,
Or his desert is small,
Who dares not put it to the touch,
And win or lose it all."

His advent in Scotland had been confidently expected in March, and every suspicious vessel which appeared off the coast was diligently reported to the Government; but that month, and many others, passed away without any sign of his coming. The Highland chiefs, whose heads were in peril unless some active step towards rebellion was taken, grew weary waiting for him, and the collapse of the movement seemed imminent.

Rob Roy was indefatigable during this period in his efforts to sustain the cause. He induced his nephew, Gregor Macgregor, who had assumed the *alias* of James Graham of Glengyle after the proscription of his own name, to muster as many of the Clan Gregor as he could draw together, and to join with his own band in their guerilla life. The young chieftain had just escaped from the tutelage of his uncle, and felt in-

clined at first to show his newly-acquired power by thwarting him ; but Rob Roy was not to be bearded in this fashion by a mere boy, and he took means to teach him his impotence.

Some years before this time a loan had been raised by Rob Roy's father (then guardian of the estate) upon the lands of Glengyle under a wadset or forfeitable bond to a neighbouring proprietor. Time rolled swiftly away (it always does when bills are maturing), and the period drew near when the money must be repaid. The exchequer at Glengyle was not equal to the task, and Rob Roy came forward and placed the requisite sum in the hands of his nephew. The bondholder, however, determined to obtain the pledge rather than the loan, as the land was worth far more than the cash advanced ; so he put off Glengyle with trivial excuses until the last day of currency had run. Rob was busily engaged recruiting and drilling men for His Majesty's service when word was brought to him that Buchanan, the holder of the wadset, had taken action against Glengyle for the recovery of his money, and had warned him away in legal fashion, sending men to take possession of the lands. Macgregor's honour was involved in this matter, since his father had contracted the loan which was likely to prove so disastrous, and he determined to see to the matter in person. The method which he adopted could only have been possible in a very unsettled time.

Learning that Buchanan had business to do in Argyllshire, and that he would return by way of Strathfillan on a certain day, Rob Roy took several of his chosen followers with him to that district and lay in wait for him. The spot which he had selected as the scene of his exploit was peculiarly favourable for his purpose. The road from the west winds through a glen which intersects the range of lofty mountains that stretches from Loch Lomond to the north of Perthshire, and after crossing the Fillan by a diminutive bridge, the path takes a south-eastward course, passing around the base of Ben Mohr. The vision is bounded on every side by the hills

which rise around, save where the strath opens before and behind the wayfarer, and displays its course by the windings of the stream. The rude boulders and lichen-covered rocks which are strewn in tumultuous confusion around, give an air of barren desolation to the scene, in marked contrast to the straths of eastern Scotland, where abundant fertility rewards the labours of the agriculturist. But for the easy communication which it afforded with the west, Strathfillan would have been quite deserted by man, and resigned to the sheep who cropped its scanty herbage, and to the summer birds who could fly beyond the influence of its austerity during the "chill seasoun." Through this lonely strath Buchanan had to make his way homeward, and here Rob Roy decided to meet him.

The windings of the road offered many places of concealment, though there was little need of extreme caution, since Buchanan had only two attendants with him. When he came within reach of the ambuscade, therefore, it was an easy task to overpower him, and Rob Roy carried his three prisoners with him to the Inn of Crianlarich. He made known his desire, and demanded that Buchanan should desist from all further proceedings against his nephew, and reinstate him at once in Glengyle. He reproached his captive in unmeasured terms with his attempt to impose upon the innocence of a simple youth, and insisted that the wadset should be delivered up without delay, since the money due upon it had been freely offered. Buchanan demurred, explained, and excused himself in so shifty a fashion that Rob Roy saw he would require to adopt extreme measures with him; so he told him in a tone of resolute firmness, such as he only assumed when his mind was made up, that he should not leave Crianlarich until the bond was delivered up to him. Expostulation was all in vain. He had not the document with him, to be sure, but he had his servants to send for it, and Rob gave him distinctly to understand that he would not lose sight of him before his purpose

was accomplished. Buchanan had no other resource but to despatch his two followers to his home that they might bring the important paper upon which his liberty depended. To prevent treachery on his part or on that of his men, Rob Roy directed two of his trustiest clansmen to accompany them, with instructions that on the least appearance of faithlessness they were to use their weapons unsparingly. The character of the Macgregors was sufficiently well known to make it certain that they would scrupulously obey the orders of their chief

The residence of Buchanan was at a considerable distance from Crianlarich, and some time had to elapse ere the messengers could return. But Rob Roy kept close guard upon his prisoner for the two days thus occupied, allowing him only such liberty as prevented all danger of his escape. When his retainers came back under the guard of the Macgregors they brought with them the all-important bond, and Buchanan thought that he had merely to present it to the chief, obtain the money which he had advanced, and take his departure. Such, however, was no part of Rob Roy's intention. He had lost two days, at a very critical time, over the rectification of this affair, and he deemed himself entitled to remuneration. The unfair dealing of Buchanan towards young Glengyle had cancelled, in his opinion, any claim which he may have had ; so Rob Roy took possession of the bond, refusing to repay any portion of Buchanan's money, and bade him take himself off, and be thankful that he had not thrashed him soundly to teach him better behaviour.

With this document in his hand Rob Roy returned to the House of Glengyle, and turned out the intruders who had taken possession in Buchanan's name. Having it now in his power to replace his nephew in his ancestral home, he stipulated that he should call out the sept which he commanded, and throw in his fortunes with the Pretender. The influence which Rob could exercise enabled him to procure a commission for Gre-

gor Macgregor—known in tradition as *Gluur Dhu*, black knee, from a birth-mark which his kilt did not cover—and the ancient clan which the Stuarts had done their utmost to annihilate was thus sworn to fight for the restoration of their heir to the throne. The number of men under the joint-leadership of Rob Roy and Glengyle has been variously stated as 300 and 400 ; but, as the official return of the Clan Gregor by Duncan Forbes of Culloden, in 1745, was 700, though Sheriffmuir intervened, we may suppose that the latter number is nearest to the truth. The capacity of these men could not be measured by number. They had been trained to a warlike life from their earliest years, and had been inured to hardship of every kind, so that their value as auxiliaries in a civil war whose battlefield was likely to be in the midst of their own territory can hardly be exaggerated.

The duplicity of the Scottish statesmen who were then at the head of affairs is very astounding to the student who examines their history. Hardly one amongst them on either side could be depended upon, and as the crisis approached their conduct became still more unsteady. Breadalbane had plotted with the Jacobites, thrown them off, renewed negotiations, and finally declared for the Hanoverian Dynasty. Montrose—once a loyal Tory, as was also his illustrious ancestor—had veered around to the opposite party, and taken a large share in the compassing of the Union which the nation wished at this time to renounce. Lord Justice-Clerk Cokburn of Ormiston had also lent his aid to this nefarious transaction, and was detested throughout the land. We have the authority of a private letter of the period for stating that he was so much abhorred that even the ladies, when at their card-tables, were wont to call the Nine of Diamonds by his name, looking upon it as a synonym for the cant-term of “the Curse of Scotland,” usually applied to that card. Perhaps Argyll, however, was the greatest puzzle of them all. He had refused to co-operate with Montrose, yet he ranged himself

upon the Hanoverian side. He had mustered his clansmen to assist in subduing the threatened revolt, though he publicly protected and supported Rob Roy, one of its most active agents, and winked at the preparations for a rebellion which were made in his own immediate neighbourhood. Could he have been persuaded to throw in his lot with the Jacobites the issue of the contest could no longer have been doubtful. If the Duke of Argyll in the west had co-operated with the Earl of Mar in the north, and the Earl of Perth in the south Highlands, instead of dallying with both parties, there is little doubt but that the Stuart line would have again been placed on the throne, and the progress of civilisation thereby retarded for a century or so. But whilst he hovered on the wing, King James continued to doubt and to fear, until his golden hour had fled away.

The protection which Argyll gave to Rob Roy had a peculiar effect upon him. He was unwilling to break up a friendship which the Duke had offered after so many years of persecution; and he could not be blind to the fact that the Campbells had frankly befriended himself and his family when at their sorest need. To break with Argyll was to place himself entirely within his power; yet to hold by him was to become untrue to the cause which he had sworn to uphold, and whose leaders looked upon him as one of their chief supporters. How should he decide in such a momentous affair?

CHAPTER XII.

THE POOL OF SAINT FILLAN.

Vinditius—"Rise, Sir Knight, and tell me before the Majesty of the People, what have you to say that you should not have your neck broke down the Tarpeian rock, your body burnt, and your ashes thrown in the Tiber?"

Fabritius—"Oh! Oh! Oh!"

Vin.—"A courtier! a sheep-biter! Leave off your blubbering, and confess."

Fab.—"Oh! I will confess, I will confess!"

Lucius Junius Brutus.—NAT. LEE.

The anomalous position which Rob Roy occupied whilst under the protection of Argyll seriously puzzled the Whig leaders. They knew that the traditional enmity between the Campbells and Macgregors had not been atoned, and they could not account for a friendship springing up betwixt two chieftains whose ancestors had made the slaughtering of each other the chief end of their existence. They dared not think that Argyll meant to play them false, since he could easily have wrought their overthrow, so they rushed to the conclusion that the amity between Rob Roy and Argyll had been fostered by the latter that he might win from the bold outlaw such confidence under the name of friendship as would enable him to quench "the rude eye of rebellion" at the very outset. The Duke of Atholl records his opinion that Rob Roy "knows much of the transactions in the Highlands," though he lives mostly in the wilds of Argyllshire and under the protection of the Campbells; and he counsels Cokburne to have him captured at any cost, as the apprehension of Rob Roy would open up all the intrigues which then occupied the attention of the country.

Cokburne, however, was too wary to be misled by appearances, and his estimate of Rob Roy was certainly not a

flattering one. He knew that bribes had been offered by the Whigs to Rob Roy to induce him to betray his fellow-conspirators, and that they had been indignantly rejected ; and as he could not understand patriotism which had not its price, he concluded that "Rob imposed upon both partys," and wrote accordingly to Montrose. This, we believe, was the origin of a somewhat widely spread notion that Rob Roy was a traitor both to Jacobites and Hanoverians, and wormed out the secrets of the one faction that he might betray it to the other. As our narrative proceeds it will be seen that this was an unfounded calumny, invented by his enemies to ruin his reputation with the friends whose cause he had adopted.

The idea of any one standing forth as the champion of his down-trodden countrymen against the greed, the villany, and fraudfulness of their superiors, irrespective of political creed, was quite beyond the comprehension of the venal statesmen of the period. To them there was something almost ludicrous in the notion of the lower orders having rights of any kind ; and they imputed such base motives to Rob Roy as their own evil hearts suggested. That a Highland chief should arm his followers and go forth, like another Quixote, to right the wrongs of the world, in the enlightened days of Thomson, of Pope, and of Swift, seemed to them subject merely for scorn and derision. And when they found that he attacked, with scrupulous impartiality, men of both parties who had oppressed the poor, they could consider his conduct as little short of a proof of insanity. Regardless, however, of their opinions, and conscious of his own integrity, Rob Roy pursued his career, protecting the helpless, abasing the proud, and rectifying injustice wherever he encountered it. The traditions which still linger in the localities that he frequented sufficiently vindicate him from the slanders of his enemies, and prove that above all things he fought for the poor man's cause, and strove at all hazards to succour the oppressed. Some of the stories told of him are worth relating.

The advancement of the power of law in those parts of the Highlands which had formerly known no rule save that of the sword was necessarily slow; and the unworthy instruments chosen by the Government to execute the penalties for infringement of the law served only to awaken the wrath and contempt of the Highlanders. This was especially the case in the matter of heritable properties. The various clans had held the lands upon which they were located from time immemorial, and they could not understand why the imposition of a sovereign upon the country had cancelled their rights to their ancient heritages, and rendered them dependent upon his bounty. But the wiser chiefs amongst them saw that a judicious submission to the power of the throne would enable them to aggrandise themselves, and increase their estates at the expense of their neighbours. We have already seen how fatally this policy had affected the Macgregors, and how they had been hunted from place to place through the land to make way for the grasping and greedy chiefs of the house of Campbell. Even down to the time of Rob Roy this system of legal plundering had been continued; and it became his lot to oppose its progress for a time, and to restrain the ravages which were committed under its sanction.

The method adopted by these chartered brigands of the Law was simple, but, in most cases, effectual. It was maintained that no one could hold land save by gift from the Crown, and all estates whose occupants could not produce written charters entitling them to possession were declared forfeited, and reverted once more to the King. It may easily be understood that to an illiterate race like the Highlanders, who had been accustomed to keep their lands at the point of the sword, such a system of wholesale confiscation would appear unjustifiable; and it is not wonderful that many of them resisted the law to the very utmost of their power. And when, in 1714, two rival Kings claimed the throne, full license was given to each political party to despoil their

adversaries, under cover of this convenient excuse for rapine and plunder.

The Duke of Argyll had been no whit behind his forefathers in taking advantage of this state of affairs, and the territories of the Clan Campbell had been extended in all directions. He had commissioned one of his own family to carry on this legal warfare, and as this knight knew that unscrupulousness was the surest passport to the favour of his patron, he laid his plans accordingly. Many stories are told of the dark deeds which he committed under the shelter of the law for the aggrandisement of his feudal superior, and as these illustrate his character sufficiently, and show the state of the country at the time, we may repeat one or two of them.

The Macleans had been at enmity with the Campbells for a long period before 1715, and the feud which had been revived by Lauchlan Maclean of Duart early in the seventeenth century had been kept alive during the intervening time. The ancient clan had been banished from the Island of Mull, their ancestral residence, and the towers which had been the dwellings of their forefathers had fallen into the hands of the omnivorous Campbells. They still, however, kept up the semblance of their former dignity in the remote district of Kingairloch, in Morvern, and maintained the traditions of their clan though shorn of their former possessions. During the agitation amongst the Highland clans in 1713-14 The Maclean had committed himself to the support of the Pretender, and Argyll had consequently marked him for his prey. He set his faithful knight upon the pursuit, and waited patiently, confident of success.

Taking a number of armed retainers with him so as to overawe Maclean, Campbell set out with his little fleet of boats to cross Loch Linnhe, and soon arrived at the Morvern shore. He was met on the beach by the chief whom he sought, and was invited to partake of Highland hospitality. The knowledge of his intended treachery, however, prevented him from

trusting his life within the hands of his enemy, and the invitation was declined. His prudence probably saved him from destruction. Maclean had heard of his projected visit, and had prepared to receive him worthily. He had caused a large number of his clansmen to equip themselves for battle, and had placed them in ambush amongst the yellow broom which fringed the pathway to his mansion,

“ All plaided and plumed in their tartan array.”

As Campbell walked with the chief from the landing-place towards the house, the conversation was artfully turned by the knight upon the rights of property, and he at length plainly asked Maclean by what charter he held the lands of Kingairloch upon which they stood. He well knew that the ancestors of the chief had been in possession of these hills, and of many others since fallen into the rapacious hands of Argyll, from a very remote period ; but it was his purpose to set the law in motion against him in defiance of equity. Maclean, however, was ready with his reply. At a rapid signal from him his kilted warriors sprang from their covert and surrounded them, waving aloft their claymores, and shouting the slogan of their clan.

“ Instant, through copse and heath, arose
Bonnets, and spears, and bended bows ;
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe :
From shingles grey their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
The rushes and the willow-wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior armed for strife.”

“ These,” said Maclean, waving his hand towards his kinsmen, “ are the charters by which I hold my lands, as my forefathers have done for ages ; and they will manfully maintain my rights against any who dares gainsay them.”

This display of force was more than Campbell had anticipated, and he sneaked back to his vessel, and set sail speedily from the shore which had so nearly been fatal to him.

Luck, however, was not always against him, and his unscrupulous dealing sometimes secured the reward which he sought. He had coveted the lands of one of the Macdougalls, and determined to obtain them by any means. Their possessor was a weak-minded man, ill fitted to cope with the astute baronet, and he soon became his prey. Macdougall had been married for a considerable time, but there was yet no heir born to inherit his domains, and it seemed likely that his race would cease with him. By wily persuasions and darkly-veiled suggestions, Campbell tempted the imbecile chief to turn away his lawfully-wedded wife from her home, and to marry one of his own relations in her place. Trusting to his friendship, Macdougall did as he suggested, marrying the wife whom Campbell had so generously provided. Hardly had he completed the ceremony ere Campbell caused him to be arrested for bigamy and thrown into prison, whilst he claimed the forfeited estates of Macdougall as the reward of his perfidy!

This was the man whom Rob Roy was now to come into contact with. The tales of his oppression and deceit had already made him infamous, and the wrath of Macgregor had been kindled against him; but he had not yet an excuse for attacking the baronet, and he could not afford to insult a Campbell gratuitously. At length his opportunity came round. While engaged upon some of his annexing expeditions, Campbell had encountered one of the Clan Gregor who possessed a small property in Glendochart, and, deeming that the member of a broken clan was his legitimate prey, he ruthlessly evicted him, and laid violent hands upon his possessions. The law was powerless to protect the poor man from his rich enemy in those days, and Campbell flattered himself that he might commit any injustice against him with im-

punishment. He despised his foe, and suffered severely for his temerity.

The unfortunate Macgregor, thus rudely thrown adrift upon the world, made his way quickly to the home of his chief, and related the indignities which he had endured to Rob Roy, with every demonstration of grief and resentment. Rob heard him patiently, and soon determined upon his course of action. Campbell was then at Glenorchay, so he despatched several of his trustiest followers to waylay and capture him. The task was not a formidable one, as Campbell, deeming himself secure in the midst of his own chief's country, wandered through the locality unattended. One day he had listlessly prolonged his walk by the shores of Loch Awe until he reached the base of Ben Cruachain, and had sat down upon a rock to rest for a brief space, whilst he scanned the scene before him. His meditations were rudely interrupted by the appearance of three clansmen wearing the dreaded Macgregor tartan, who advanced towards him apparently with hostile intentions. He was far beyond the reach of assistance, and his frantic appeals for mercy and shouts for aid were re-echoed ineffectually from the rocks of that mountain solitude. His weapon of offence had been the pen rather than the sword, and he was soon overpowered by his assailants and borne rapidly away to be confronted with the chief of the Macgregors.

Rob Roy was then at Tyndrum, and thither Campbell was carried to meet him. The journey, though short, was a critical one, since it lay through the midst of the Campbell country, and the least hint from their prisoner to his clansmen of the danger which threatened him would have brought speedy vengeance upon his captors' heads. They succeeded, however, in conveying their charge safely to their destination, and found their chief awaiting them. It required no elaborate legal process to convict the knight of an infringement upon the rights of a Macgregor, and his evil reputation precluded

all hope of leniency. Terrified by the fierce attitude of the leader, he was willing to perform any act of revocation proposed to him, and eagerly consented to sign a paper reinstating the evicted clansman of Rob Roy in his lands at Glendochart, expecting thereby to purchase his freedom. He was too contemptible an enemy for Rob to waste time upon, but the chief could not refrain from executing a grimly humorous vengeance upon him.

Not far from Tyndrum stands the ancient Pool of St Fillan—a spot long held sacred in Scotland, since it had been associated with the great struggle for independence which was victoriously terminated at Bannockburn. According to tradition the Saint had been at some remote time Prior of Pittenweem, and after his canonisation had become the favourite saint of Robert the Bruce. The sacred Crozier of St Fillan had been carefully preserved during all the troubled times of early Scottish history, and had led the troops of Bruce to victory on the bloody field of Bannockburn. The Pool of St Fillan had been specially blessed by the departed ecclesiastic, and even up to the beginning of this century was resorted to by the faithful, who believed that its waters formed a sovereign specific for all diseases. Especially had it been found efficacious in curing lunacy; and Rob Roy determined to test its power in this respect upon his unhappy captive.

The method followed by all who wished to derive benefit from bathing in the Pool of St Fillan is thus described by an old writer :—

“ If it were for any bodily pain or sore that they are bathing they throw upon one of three cairns [in the neighbourhood] that part of their clothing that covered the part affected; and if they have at home any beast that is diseased, they bring some of the meal it feeds upon and make it into paste with the water of the pool, and afterwards give it to the beast to eat, which is an infallible cure, but they must likewise throw

upon the cairn the rope or halter with which the beast is led. Consequently the cairns are covered with old halters, gloves, shoes, bonnets, nightcaps, rags of all sorts, kilts, petticoats, garters, and smocks. When mad people are bathed they throw them in with a rope tied about the middle, after which they are taken to St Fillan's Church, where there is a large stone with a niche in it just large enough to receive them. In this stone trough, which lies in the open churchyard, they are fastened down to a wooden framework and there left for a whole night with a covering of hay over them, and St Fillan's bell is put upon their heads. If in the morning the unhappy patient is found loose, the saint is supposed to be propitious; if, on the contrary, he continues in bonds, the case is supposed doubtful."

This was the ordeal to which Rob Roy designed to subject his prisoner, to cure him of the infatuation that had tempted him to meddle with a Macgregor, and he did not abate one jot of the prescribed formula. Despite his indignant remonstrances he was carried to the margin of the sacred pool, his gay attire torn from his person and cast among the refuse clothing of previous pilgrims, and he was dipped repeatedly beneath the holy waters, amid the scoffing jests of the surrounding clansmen. When his ablutions had been completed he was led to the trough of St Fillan and bound to the framework which had been occupied by former lunatics, and left there to await the interposition of a dubious saint who had gone to his tomb many centuries before.

Witness, then, this scion of a noble line stretched helplessly, "a mother-naked man," upon the spot reserved for imbeciles, despoiled of his gaudy habiliments, and forced to endure the piercing winds and blistering dews of that long and dreary night! Did St Fillan visit him and release him from his ignominious bonds? Or was it but some common wayfarer who compassionated his sufferings, undid the thongs which bound him, and aided him to encase himself once more in his soiled and tawdry garments? History is silent upon this

point; but it is certain that he made his way to the Duke of Argyll, and laid such an account of this outrage before him as incensed that nobleman against its perpetrator. Argyll had refrained from lifting his hand against Rob Roy so long as that daring reiver had avoided meddling with the Campbells, but he would not endure his interference with one of his own unscrupulous agents. And thus Rob Roy's merry jest brought him into conflict with one who might become his most powerful enemy.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE HUNTING OF BRAEMAR.

“ Mery it was in the grene forest
Among the leavès grene,
Whereas men hunt east and west
With bowes and arrowes kene,
To raise the dere out of theyr denne,
Suche sightes hath ofte bene sene.”

—*Ballad of Adam Bell.*

Having seriously compromised himself by his attack upon the Duke of Argyll's kinsman, Rob Roy was forced to retire for a time from the scene of his greatest activity, and to avoid coming in contact with the emissaries of His Grace until the storm had blown over. He had been allowed considerable latitude by Argyll, probably in the hope that he would betray the secrets of the rebels with which he was entrusted; but the Duke could not tolerate such an affront as had been put upon his relative at St Fillan's Pool, and his indignation was aroused against him. Finding that the country of Breadalbane no longer afforded a safe retreat for his family, Rob descended to the shores of Loch Lomond at the head of his clan, and easily recaptured his house at Craigrostan, expelling Montrose's soldiers, and re-instating his wife at the head of his household. From Inversnaid and Craigrostan he could menace the whole of the eastern side of Loch Lomond, and command those waters which formed an important outlet from the Highlands to the Frith of Clyde.

Rumours of the intended landing of the Pretender were freely circulated, but the exact spot to be chosen for this purpose was kept secret, even from those who were deep in the Jacobite councils. There were serious objections to his attempting to land on the east Lowlands, as the Capital was

then entirely in the hands of the Hanoverians, and all its approaches strictly guarded, whilst the power of the Duke of Argyll on the western coast would have rendered the task a difficult one if essayed in that quarter. Two courses were open to the conspirators—they might endeavour to effect a landing at Aberdeen, where the friendship of the Earl Marischal would be of great assistance to them; or they might enter Scotland by the Frith of Clyde, and, after taking Dunbarton Castle, they would be able to command the wealth of the city of Glasgow, and gain access to the network of roads which ran from that place to every important town in the kingdom. It is evident that the possession of Loch Lomond by the Macgregors would greatly facilitate the designs of the rebels upon Dunbarton and the western capital, and Rob Roy confined his marauding expeditions once more to the lands of his old enemy Montrose, extending his operations as far south as Balloch and the banks of the Leven.

The Whigs were grievously perplexed by his conduct, and cast about for an explanation of it. They imagined that terror of the vengeance that Argyll had threatened him with constrained him to remain at Craigrostan; and he certainly took no steps to disabuse their minds of this idea. Græme of Killearn, writing from Buchanan House on the 14th June 1715, and describing a kinsman's travels in the Highlands, records that "the Highlanders were active; 10,000 targets were prepared, broadswords and belts having been procured from Glasgow, Dunblane, &c., the Captain of Clan Ronald had been communing with Lord Antrim, and had 100 guineas from him; Rob Roy had to live close at home, he and the Laird of Lochbuy being distrusted for sending intelligence to Argyll and Islay."

This was the Whiggish interpretation put upon Rob's procedure, though after-events showed that it was far from the truth. It suited his purpose, however, to suffer this notion to get abroad, that he might accomplish his end unobserved.

Meanwhile the Jacobites in Scotland waited anxiously, expecting that each day would bring intelligence of the invasion of their country by him whom they called their lawful Sovereign, at the head of an overwhelming force of French soldiers.

The Jacobite movement, however, was for a long time in existence before it found a capable leader, or even a man of mark who would risk his life to attain that position. Breadalbane temporised too much to receive the confidence of the party; the Earl Marischal was a weak and vacillating man, slow in devising and tardy in executing the measures which the time demanded. The impetuous Marquis of Tullibardine, son of the Duke of Atholl, was too daring and reckless to assume the lead in a Civil War; and the Marquis of Huntly, son of the Duke of Gordon, though zealous enough in the cause of the Pretender, had not that well-balanced character which was necessary in the circumstances. And it was at this time that the course of events brought one man to the front whose energy could prepare a revolution, but who had not the courage needful to carry it on to completion. That man was the Earl of Mar, and some idea of his character may enable us to understand the stirring events in which Rob Roy was about to be engaged.

John Erskine, Earl of Mar, had occupied a prominent position at the Court of Queen Anne during the latter portion of her reign, and though he had been looked upon as one of the staunchest of Scottish Whigs at the Union, he had joined the Tory party of Bolingbroke when his office was in danger. He was Secretary of State at that critical time which occurred between the Massacre of Glencoe and the death of Queen Anne; and the influence which his vast northern possessions gave him had been faithfully devoted to the upholding of the Protestant Succession, and the exclusion of the descendants of King James from the throne. He had endeavoured to pacify the clans by bribes and concessions, and his efforts had been crowned with some measure of success. Indeed, so skilfully

had he finessed that he managed to allay much of the turbulent spirit amongst the Highlanders, and prepared the way for the bloodless inauguration of a new dynasty. If any one amongst the Scottish statesmen of the time deserved well at the hands of the House of Hanover, surely it was the versatile and diplomatic Earl of Mar.

But George I. came to England with very imperfect notions of the dangerous state of the political atmosphere; and the task of ruling two nations so imperfectly joined as Scotland and England was far more difficult than he had imagined. Accustomed to direct his petty German principality in an absolute and paternal manner, he deemed that the fashion of government suitable there would be admirably adapted to the wants of the mighty nation which he was now to govern. He began his reign, therefore, by an act of despotism which alienated the affections of a large portion of his subjects at once, and deprived him of the support that a policy of conciliation would have called forth. All the Tories who had held office under the late Queen, and to whom he owed his peaceful elevation, were turned out of their places, and their vacant posts were filled by those ambidextrous Whigs who sailed with the wind of Court-favour. The Earl of Oxford was impeached and thrown into prison; Bolingbroke, the accomplished but insincere Secretary of State, fled to France, and attached himself to the cause of the Pretender; and the chivalrous Duke of Ormond unwillingly withdrew from the country where his faithful services had been scorned and derided by the dominant Whig party. The most important offices of State were committed to the charge of those Whigs who had been either consistent or hypocritical enough to secure the attention of royalty. The command of the forces in Scotland was given to the Duke of Argyll; Lord Townshend succeeded Bolingbroke as Secretary of State; and our old friend the Duke of Montrose was made Secretary for Scotland in room of the Earl of Mar, who was dismissed ignominiously from that office.

Mar did not resign his portfolio without a struggle. Ere the new King landed in England the Earl had procured a kind of certificate of merit from a number of the Highland chiefs, in which his claims to the consideration of King George were fully set forth, but his efforts were of no avail. He was frigidly received by the King, and informed that the address by the Highlanders could not be accepted; and he was forthwith ordered to resign his seals of office, and dismissed from the Court. There is every likelihood that a little tenderness on the part of His Majesty would have secured the adherence of Mar to the Hanoverians; but the politics of Herrenhausen were now to dominate in the councils of Great Britain; and the King preferred, with short-sighted policy, to be the chief of the Whig party rather than the ruler of a great nation.

It need not excite wonder that Mar, soured by the treatment he had endured, decided to adhere to the Tory party, with whom he had lately cast in his lot; and his personal experience of King George naturally led him to advise the Jacobites, whom he had joined, to adopt measures for the speedy and complete overthrow of the House of Guelph. He soon became one of the most active of the insurrectionists in Scotland, and determined to win distinction in the ranks of that party which he had formerly denounced and reprobated. He put himself in communication with all the malcontents in the north, and his familiar acquaintance with the renegade members who had joined the Pretender in France enabled him to receive and transmit intelligence from and to St Germain. His activity and devotion soon placed him amongst the foremost of the insurgents, and he managed those with whom he had to deal with so much diplomacy that the direction of the rebellion fell almost entirely into his hands.

As the county of Fife was then the chief centre of the Tories in Scotland, Mar decided to begin his operations in that district. The extensive seaboard which it possessed made it a convenient place either for invasion or escape; and Mar

-adopted the little port of Elie as his residence, and awaited there the aid from France which the Jacobites expected. Every method of exciting the hopes of the party was put in force, and he succeeded, by letters, by personal solicitations, and by dazzling promises of rewards, in arousing the conspirators to something like enthusiasm. And yet there was little in the aspect of Continental affairs to afford them encouragement. France had repeatedly endured defeat and disaster in her encounters with the British forces under Marlborough; and as that Duke had been appointed by the new King to the command of the army it was not likely that Louis XIV. would risk a fresh repulse at his hands by confronting him on his native soil. Besides, the French King was then on his death-bed; and, though he had protected and assisted the exiled Stuarts for many years, they had little to hope for from those who should succeed him. But the idea of revolution had taken a firm hold upon the Scottish mind, and many who feared to risk themselves within the ranks of the rebels were willing enough that their efforts should prove successful.

Matters were in this state when Rob Roy entered Craigh-rostan in the manner which we have described. His intention was to advance warily towards Dunbarton, and by one rapid movement to capture this stronghold, and thereby gain the key of the Firth of Clyde. The ancient rock upon which the Castle stood had been utilised as a fortress from pre-historic times, and had rarely been taken by storm; but with culpable negligence the new Government had omitted to place it upon a war footing, though it lay in the midst of a disturbed district, and would form the chief protection for the city of Glasgow. The Earl of Glencairn had been appointed Castellane in 1714, but he found the fortress in so imperfect a state that he despaired of being able to hold it against a determined assault. He wrote repeatedly to Montrose complaining of its condition, and applied to Marlborough for the necessary armaments, declaring that he had no defensive stores "but some olde

rusty bullets and matches ;” yet his complaints were unheeded, although he assured the Duke that this Castle was next in importance to that of Edinburgh. There can be little doubt but that Rob Roy would soon have obtained possession of the place had he not been suddenly warned to desist, and called away to another employment in a different part of the country.

The death of Louis XIV. upon the 1st of August 1715 precipitated the movements of the Jacobite party. Mar knew well that the Duke of Orleans, to whom the Regency of France had fallen, was no friend to the Stuart family, and was little likely to break the treaty of Utrecht, by which Louis had secured peace through engaging to recognise the Hanoverian succession, and to abandon the Pretender. The French nation had hitherto merely used the claims of the Pretender as a menace to England ; but the severe reverses which they had suffered made their new ruler cautious of offending a power which had so plainly proved its supremacy. Knowing that there was little aid to be received from this quarter, Mar nevertheless decided to keep up the hollow expectations of the Jacobites by pretended promises of support which had no existence. He believed that if the Scottish clans could be provoked by any means to united action, nothing could stand before them. His untiring efforts in the Jacobite cause were eminently successful. Many of the leading noblemen in the shires of Perth, Stirling, Forfar, and Fife prepared their vassals and retainers for a general rising, and awaited the summons of Mar to take the field in support of King James VIII.

Convinced of the hopelessness of effecting a favourable diversion in the south, and well aware that delay was now the greatest danger which he had to dread, Mar decided to retire to his northern estates at Braemar, and convoke his fellow-conspirators to meet him there. He called upon every noble who had shown any sympathy with the exiled family of Stuart to muster in force, and no likely name of note was omitted

from his invitation. The claims of Rob Roy to notice could not be overlooked; and, as his quarrel with Argyll made it dangerous for him to remain in his neighbourhood lest an outbreak should take place prematurely. Mar employed him upon diplomatic service in the north, which prevented this danger. A large body of Macgregors had been established in Aberdeenshire nearly a century before this time, having been deported by the Earl of Moray from his Menteith estate to this locality, so as to counteract the influence of the Macintoshes. During that period they had developed the worst traditional characteristics of their clan, and had become the terror of all peaceable men in the north. Repressive measures had been impotent to restrain them, and had merely goaded them into greater excesses and further proofs of their lawlessness. They were the men to whom Mar had dispatched Rob Roy, directing him to form a contingent for the Jacobite service out of these unpromising materials.

Leaving Craigrostan in charge of a few of his men, Rob journeyed northward at the head of his clan and reached Aberdeen in safety. His position as chief of the Macgregors gave him great influence over the rude fellow-clansmen whom he encountered; and it would require no very deep reasoning to convince them that they had everything to gain and nothing to lose by the projected rebellion. His own reputation made them accept him willingly as their leader, and he found himself in absolute command of as daring a band of warriors as any of the Highland chiefs could call together.

The pretence of a great hunting in Braemar gave the Earl an opportunity of sounding the leaders of the party; and he knew that if he could gather together a considerable number of the nobles and chiefs with their followers on such an occasion that he would be able to commit many of them to the support of the enterprise who had been theretofore vacillating and uncertain. His designs were crowned with success. Some of the most powerful Scottish nobles were present, with

their following; and the Jacobite cause seemed to be once more in the ascendant. The families of Gordon and Atholl were represented by the Marquesses of Huntly and Tulliebardine, and even the time-serving Breadalbane sent his kinsman Campbell of Glendaruel as his deputy; and the chiefs of rival clans dismissed for the time their animosity, and united against their common enemy—the Hanoverian usurper. The overwhelming display of force thus made had the effect of confirming many in their adherence to King James; and Mar did not scruple to make liberal promises of French aid, which he knew he could never fulfil. They served his purpose, however, and gave his hearers the impression that he had the confidence and support of the King and his advisers. Arrangements were made for another meeting of the conspirators to be held within a fortnight, and the Earl had no reason to be displeased with his first act of overt rebellion.

The Government soon became aware of these ominous meetings, and when a daring but unsuccessful attack was made upon Edinburgh Castle, they found it necessary to bestir themselves. The troops then in Scotland were few in number and widely scattered, so that it was needful to centralise their forces to protect the more important towns. It was supposed that disaffection had not spread to any great extent in the Lowlands, and the opinion of the Government was that if the insurgents could be confined to the northern portion of the kingdom, where forage was scanty and plunder scarce, the revolt would be stifled without much trouble. For this purpose the head-quarters of the Government troops were fixed at Stirling, and communication was established with Fort William and with Edinburgh.

Besides these physical precautions the Government adopted several important moral expedients to nullify rebellion. The Clan Act, which abolished the feudal superiority of the chiefs, was hastily passed through Parliament, and preparations made by it for a wholesale confiscation of rebel property. One of

the most important clauses in this Act conferred the power upon the Crown of summoning "any suspected person or persons in Scotland to appear at Edinburgh, or where it should be judged expedient, for the purpose of finding bail, with certification that their failure to appear should subject them to be put to the horn as rebels, and that they should incur the forfeiture of the life-rent escheat."

The object for which this clause was inserted was soon made apparent. Hardly had it become law ere summonses were issued to all the nobles and chiefs of note who were suspected of Jacobite leanings; and though nearly fifty were thus ordered to appear at Edinburgh, only two responded to the call. Rob Roy had been specially included in this list, and as he, in common with such men as Mar, Huntly, Drummond, and Gordon, had refused to surrender, he was outlawed a second time, and his slender estate declared forfeited to the Crown. He could not now withdraw from the Jacobites, even had he been so minded; and he hastened back to Craigrostan, lest Montrose or his emissaries should perpetrate another outrage upon his family and household.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE INVASION OF CRAIGROSTAN.

“ A prudent chief not always must display
His powers in equal rank, and fair array ;
But with th’ occasion and the place comply,
Conceal his force, nay seem sometimes to fly.
Those oft are stratagems which errors seem,
Nor is it Homer nods, but we who dream.”—*Pope*.

When Rob Roy returned to Craigrostan from the north, he found that his presence there was urgently required. The edict of confiscation and outlawry had been already issued, and the western Whigs were preparing to execute their vengeance upon him. Leaving a portion of his men encamped at Strathfillan, he entered his own territory with a small band of his clansmen, and at once began to make ready for another flitting. Deeply did he regret that the imperative orders of Mar had prevented him from capturing the Castle of Dunbarton, since his possession of it at this time would have secured the district of Loch Lomond-side from the intrusion of the foe ; but he had submitted to the dictation of that leader until the opportunity had passed, and he was forced to abandon his own house and lands, and remove once more from the homestead which he had regained from his enemies.

Some intelligence was brought him that the valiant Whigs of Paisley and Dunbarton had combined to organise an expedition against him. They had learned that he was in the north engaged upon political service, and the letters of outlawry seemed to afford them an excuse for destroying his strongholds on Loch Lomond ; so with infinite pains they prepared an invincible armada to invade these peaceful waters, and to conquer the unresisting robber-chief whom they dreaded.

The strict injunctions which he had received from Mar to avoid any outbreak until the rebel forces were united, compelled him, however unwillingly, to refrain from opposing them; but we may easily believe that it was after a hard struggle that he consented to resign everything to his foes without striking one blow in his own defence. Mar's commands were imperative, however, and Macgregor feared to precipitate the revolt by any action which might divide the Jacobite leaders.

His wife and children were his first care. He had removed them from Breadalbane's land lest they should suffer from the results of his conflict with Argyll; but the action of the former nobleman at the Hunting of Braemar had re-established his confidence in him, and he deemed that the safest retreat for his fugitive family would be found in the recesses of Rannoch, or on the shores of Loch Tay. Hurriedly preparing them for their departure, and selecting such of his household gods as he deemed worthy of preservation, he sent his family northwards under the care of a chosen band of his followers, and remained as a rear-guard to witness the assault upon his homestead.

The Paisley and Dunbarton Whigs had assembled in force, but their notions of warfare were of the rudest description. The band of Paisley volunteers had crossed the Clyde, and joined their fellow-patriots at Dunbarton, and the united army had marched by the banks of the Leven to Balloch, expecting to find boats there to convey them to Craigrostan. Their anticipations, however, were disappointed. Ere Rob Roy's clansmen had retired he had caused them to seize all the boats which they could lay hands on, and to draw them far up on the beach at Inversnaid, so as to obstruct the advance of the enemy till he should have secured his retreat northwards. The Whigs were compelled, therefore, to alter their plans, and they determined to make a circuit by the western shore of the loch, and to persuade Sir Humphrey Colquhoun of Luss to aid them in their projected invasion of Rob Roy's territory.

Night had overtaken them before they reached the mansion of Luss, but they were hospitably received by the Baronet, and invited to remain till morning. Their expedition was regarded with favour by him, and he promised to aid them in the enterprise as far as he could. He bore no good-will toward Rob Roy for several reasons, and was glad to avail himself of this opportunity to gratify his spleen. He had been a member of the Union Parliament, and had long professed Whiggish principles. Related by descent to the family of Montrose, he had lately supported the Duke in his repressive policy in Scotland; and the wrongs which that nobleman had endured at the hands of Rob Roy had roused Sir Humphrey's indignation. It may be remembered by the reader that the chief had interfered to prevent the projected marriage of Hugh Macgregor with the heiress of Luss, and though he had thus preserved the family of Colquhoun from a *mésalliance*, the Baronet had deeply resented his interference. Since that time he had married his daughter Anna to Sir James Grant of Pluscardine, and by a special arrangement had constituted his son-in-law heir to all his entailed estates. Grant owed the Macgregors a grudge for the depredations which they had committed upon his Morayshire property, and as he was then residing at Luss, he willingly agreed to join in the attack upon the head of this rebellious clan. The *détour* which the civic army had made was thus likely to increase their forces in an unexpected manner.

Upon the following morning a grand muster took place in front of Luss House, and the Colquhouns and Grants appeared fully equipped and ready for the fray. Apart from the duty which they owed to their chief, the Colquhouns had to avenge upon the Macgregors the fatal massacre of Glenfruin—the Vale of Sorrow—and the time seemed propitious for their purpose. The Grants, who were then at Luss, formed Sir James' body-guard, and were picked men, accoutred in the most approved fashion. A contemporary writer describes them as

“ forty or fifty stately fellows in their short hose and belted plaids, armed each with a well-fixed gun on his shoulder, a strong, handsome target, with a sharp-pointed steel of above half an ell in length screwed into the navel of it, on his left arm, a sturdy claymore by his side, and a pistol or two, with a dirk and knife in his belt.” This strange mixture of the arms of savage and civilised warfare indicates plainly the transitional stage through which the Highland clans were passing, and shows the influence which their leader’s union with a Lowland chief’s daughter had exercised upon his followers. The description irresistibly recalls Sir Alexander Boswell’s satirical lines :—

“ Come the Grants of Tullochgorum,
 Wi’ their pipers gaun before ’em,
 Proud the mothers are that bore ’em,
 Fiddle-fa’-fum.
 Next the Grants of Rothiemurchus,
 Every man his sword and durk has,
 Every man as proud’s a Turk is,
 Feedle-deedle-dum.”

When the Dunbarton Volunteers discovered at Balloch that all means of water-transport had been confiscated by the Macgregors they sent word to the Earl of Glencairn at the Castle, desiring that he would seek aid from some of the war-ships in the Clyde, and have several boats forwarded to them speedily. His application was successful, and four long-boats were towed up the Leven to the waters of Loch Lomond for their use by a small party of man-of-war sailors. They arrived at Luss early in the morning, and the invaders at once prepared to embark. Their first intention had been to land at Rowardennan Point and proceed northward to Craigrostan; but, as they did not know in what force the Macgregors had assembled, they deemed it safest to attack their stronghold from the boats, thus preventing to some extent the dangers of an ambuscade. They sailed up the Loch, therefore, until they reached Rowchoish, a point about three miles south of Inversnaid, and prepared to land there. The Fort at Inver-

snaid was the chief object of attack which they proposed to themselves, and they thought that from the heights above Rowchoish they would be able to ascertain what resistance they might expect to encounter. A small band of the invaders ascended the elevated ground at this point, but the country around seemed quite deserted, and they betook themselves again to the boats, and directed their prows still northward.

The margin of the Loch was wooded closely down to the water's edge, and as the umbrageous foliage might easily have formed a convenient lurking-place for hostile foemen, the boats were kept well out from the shore until they reached the mouth of the Arklet river. This stream forms the overflow from Loch Arklet into Loch Lomond, and receives even in its short course the tributary waters of many mountain-rivulets. The fort of the Macgregors was situated near the junction of the Snaid Burn and the Arklet; and finding the lower portion of the latter to be navigable only for a short distance, the sailors ran their light craft up the stream until they found a convenient landing-place. As no foe appeared to oppose them, they boldly ventured to disembark, and to form themselves in such array as the nature of the ground permitted. Still dubious of an ambush in the locality, they thought that their best plan would be to terrify the Macgregors, who might be lying in wait for them, by making as much din as possible, thus deceiving these reckless clansmen as to the number of the invading party. They caused the pipers whom they had brought with them to sound their loudest strains, and the drummers from Dunbarton played as vigorously as though they were inciting an army to battle and to victory. With these accompaniments the invaders marched daringly by the banks of the Arklet up to the very gate of Inversnaid Fort, determined to beard the Macgregor in his own stronghold.

To their astonishment they found the place quite deserted, the door left wide open, and the apartments stripped of every

article necessary for comfort or defence—an empty nest, in fact, from which the birds had flown! Their joy became at once unbounded, and in the exuberance of their glee they discharged their firearms in the air, and waked the echoes of the forest and mountain-solitudes by their exultations. Ascending the heights of Stob-an-Fhaine and surveying the surrounding country, this invincible battalion could find no enemy to conquer, and they concluded that their hostile demonstrations—their pibrochs, their drums, and their musketry—had so alarmed the Macgregors that they had fled in terror before them. To imagine that the members of a clan which had been actively engaged in warfare for centuries would suddenly find their hearts fail them when they heard the hideous sounds that the Grants and Colquhouns had emitted is surely the height of absurdity; but that the latter really believed that they had conquered by these means is shown by the statements of that contemporary historian whom we have already quoted. “During this expedition,” he writes, “the pinnaces discharging their patararoes, and the men their small-arms, made such a thundering noise, through the multiplied rebounding echoes of the vast mountains on both sides of the loch, that the Macgregors were cowed and frightened away to the rest of the rebels who were encamped at Strathfillan.” If this ludicrous idea had been true, then no more insane action could be imagined than for Rob Roy to lead his timorous caterans, his gentle, discord-hating brigands, into the midst of “the din of general war.”

A piece of special good fortune awaited the invaders. During all their journey northwards they had seen no signs whatever of the boats that the Macgregors had seized, and they began to fear that the fugitives had destroyed them. But as they were descending triumphantly from Stob-an-Fhaine one of the party noticed some ropes and spars partially concealed amongst the brushwood. A vigorous search disclosed that the boats which the Macgregors had captured had

been brought to this remote part of the Loch, drawn far up from the beach, and placed beneath the shade of the tangled furze and underwood which grew in wild luxuriance near the fort. The labour necessary to accomplish the seclusion of these vessels had been great, and not a few of them had been seriously injured during their unwonted journey over the crags and boulders in the neighbourhood. But their capture in this bloodless manner gave the invaders many trophies to carry homewards without their requiring to strike one blow for them; and they had won back the spoil that the Macgregors had taken without incurring any danger to themselves. The boats were carried down to the beach, and launched once more; those which had been so severely injured as to be considered dangerous were broken up, piled on the shore, and destroyed by fire; and the victorious army embarked again, and started southwards, towing their prize-vessels in their wake.

To prevent the Macgregors from placing the Whig army at such a disadvantage at any future time, it was determined that all the boats on either side of the Loch should be seized and carried to some place of safety. Each islet and creek, each ard and bay, was diligently examined, and the craft found in them were promptly confiscated and placed amongst the spoils of this armada. As this work occupied much time, night overtook them ere they reached Luss, and they were compelled to moor their boats there and remain till morning. Doubtless the halls of the Colquhouns would resound with the revelry of these dauntless heroes, who might safely jest at scars since they had never felt a wound. With the morning light the Dunbarton and Paisley Volunteers continued their journey, taking up the boats of every description which they encountered, and at last anchoring their motley fleet under the shadow and protection of Dunbarton Castle. They had succeeded in their enterprise beyond their anticipations, since they had frightened the Macgregors from the district without

a contest, and had effectually prevented them from maintaining the command of the waters of Loch Lomond.

Thus ended the famous invasion of Craigrostan. Perhaps our readers may imagine that we have given undue prominence to a very trifling episode; but they should remember that much is made of it in the Whig histories of the time. We have related the incident faithfully, and its importance may be estimated. Whilst to the Whigs it might seem to present Rob Roy as a pusillanimous coward, afraid to strike a blow in defence of his own conquests, to the Tories it proved that he was willing to submit to wrong and spoliation for the sake of the cause he had embraced; and—hardest task for a brave man!—to underlie the imputation of cowardice rather than disobey the leader whom the Jacobites had accepted. It is not impossible that Rob Roy witnessed from some place of concealment near Inversnaid the triumph of his enemies, and restrained himself from breaking forth upon them when in the midst of their exultation. He had chosen to cast in his lot with what he deemed to be the national party, and he adhered faithfully to it in this severe trial. The troops from the north were mustering at Strath Fillan, and his own men were amongst them. He was expected by the Jacobite leaders to be their guide through a country which no one knew better than he; and for the time he was one of the most important allies whom the Jacobites had secured. He hastened northwards, therefore, to join his band, taking his nephew, Glengyle, with him. The fortune and fame of Rob Roy alike depended now upon the success of the rebel army.

CHAPTER XV.

“ THE STANDARD ON THE BRAES O’ MAR.”

“ Then up with the Banner, let forest winds fan her,
She has blazed over Ettrick eight ages and more ;
In sport we’ll attend her, in battle defend her,
With heart and with hand, like our fathers before.”—*Scott*.

The camp which the Macgregors had formed at Strath Fillan had been planted there for the purpose of breaking up the communications between Fort William and Stirling, and as the successful retention of a free passage for the rebels southwards was considered to be of paramount importance, this task was judiciously committed to the clan which had made it a life-study. The Macgregors had been located in the district so long that every device of war, every ambush, and every pass of danger was thoroughly known to them, and they thus held the key of the Highlands in their keeping. But their orders were imperative not to come into open conflict with their opponents until they had received further instructions from the Earl of Mar. The intention of that commander was to endeavour to strengthen his cause by securing the aid of the wavering nobles who had not yet declared for either party, and a premature skirmish or *creagh* by Rob Roy’s men might have defeated his purpose.

To one of Rob’s ardent temperament this enforced inactivity must have been particularly irksome ; nor would it be easy for him to restrain his followers from laying violent hands upon the property of those whom they considered their enemies. But this time of probation soon passed over, and he succeeded

in maintaining the peace until the standard of rebellion had been raised. The Earl of Mar summoned as many of the Highland chiefs as he could count upon to meet him early in September at his own place of Braemar; and on the 6th of that month the banner of Scotland was reared at Castleton of Braemar, amid the plaudits of the surrounding multitude, and the Jacobite puppet was proclaimed as King James VIII. of Scotland and III. of Great Britain, with acclamation. The choice of the spot where this proclamation was made was ominously unfortunate, and almost condemned the rebellion at its birth. Instead of raising the standard in any of the chief towns of Scotland—Perth, Dundee, Glasgow, Stirling, or Edinburgh—the Earl had elected to make his first demonstration in favour of his sovereign in a remote district of Aberdeenshire, upon his own estate, and in the midst of neighbours whose personal feelings towards him prevented their violent opposition. To the Hanoverians, and to the lukewarm politicians who followed the majority, it must have appeared that he had little hope of the success of his rebellion when he dared not announce it save amongst friends who were unlikely to challenge it. Too surely did his actions indicate that the vaunted succours from France could not be relied on.

It must be owned, however, that in the early period of the rebellion Mar showed himself sufficiently active. From Braemar he despatched some of the leading noblemen to their own districts, that they might proclaim the new King, and secure the adherence of their vassals which the “Clan Act” had seriously affected. The Earl Marischal, who had fortified his castle at Dunnottar in the Jacobite interest, proclaimed the King at the Cross of Aberdeen; the Marquis of Huntly performed the same office at Castle Gordon; Earl Panmure, who had joined the rebels after the Hunting of Braemar, publicly declared his allegiance to the Stuart dynasty at Brechin; and his relative, the Earl of Southesk, did likewise at Montrose. The Marquis of Tullibardine, despite the

remonstrances of his father, the Duke of Atholl, renounced the Hanoverians in favour of King James at Dunkeld; and the proclamation of the absent Sovereign at Dundee and at Inverness seemed to complete the requisite chain of adherence amongst the chief northern towns. But no encouraging action had yet been taken by the southern cities; and Mar found it necessary to move southwards speedily, lest he should lose the prestige which he had already gained.

The city of Perth was looked upon naturally as one of the first points of attack, since it formed the connecting link in the east of Scotland betwixt the Highlands and Lowlands, and had been the frequent resort of the royal race of Stuart from the time of Robert III. downwards. Towards this place, therefore, the Earl of Mar directed his forces, and good-fortune rather than generalship placed it in his hands. But he had no definite plan of operations; he was no soldier himself, and had no competent general to advise him; and thus the advantages which he gained, and which might have been of service to his cause, were frittered away by ignorance, by dilatoriness, by poverty, until the prop upon which he leaned gave way beneath him. He was inclined to temporize, to wait for reinforcements, to delude himself with hopes of new and important adherents, and to tarry for their coming when he should have been in the field. In short, though a politician of address and subtlety, he was of all men least fit to command an expedition where chivalry and daring were as necessary as statecraft. Besides the difficulties of the campaign, he had to contend against treason and espionage amongst his own followers. He had been too anxious to obtain recruits for his army from any source, and many Government spies were numbered in the ranks of the Jacobites, who had joined the rebels for the purpose of betraying them. The Hanoverians were thus fully informed of every movement made by them, and knew precisely what value they might place upon the vapouring of their adversaries.

Even the support which Mar obtained from the nobles upon whom he counted most was very half-hearted, and the Government did not scruple to attempt their corruption by bribes. The Duke of Atholl had held aloof from joining the rebels, as we have seen, though his two sons were deeply implicated in the plot, and took a leading part in the rebellion. So much had Mar depended upon him that he had offered to resign the command of the expedition in his favour ; but Atholl had refused to accept this position, alleging that so important an appointment could only be made directly by the Pretender himself. But from letters now in the possession of the Duke of Montrose it can be proved that he was merely tampering with the rebels that he might extort more money from the Government to bribe him to loyalty towards King George. We mention this fact as we shall have occasion to refer to this nobleman’s dealings with Rob Roy at a later stage of our history ; and we think it gives a very complete notion of the situation of parties at the time.

The extent to which the spy-system was carried may be imagined from the fact that it was known in Edinburgh on the very day of the raising of the standard (6th September 1715) that Tippermuir, near Perth, was to be the rendezvous of the rebel army. The route which Mar was to follow, his resting-places, nay, even his commissariat arrangements, were carefully reported ; and had there been thorough unity between the Duke of Argyll and the officials at Edinburgh his progress might have been easily arrested. Their discord, however, enabled Mar to continue the rebellion ; and the suspicion that Argyll meant to become false to the Hanoverians prevented them from trusting him thoroughly. His intimate relations with Rob Roy had done little to foster their faith in him ; and though they could not well dispense with him, they doubted—as one of them expresses himself—that it was his purpose “to make the public subservient to his own narrow designs.”

It was not Mar's intention to descend too rapidly upon the south, but his protracted journey did not greatly improve his position. On the 13th of September he had only reached the Muir of Blairgowrie, and though the city of Perth fell into the hands of the Jacobites on the 16th of that month, he lingered by "Locheret and Moulin, Blair of Atholl and Dunkell" instead of advancing at once upon it. His army is described, in a private letter of the time, as consisting not of the clans, but of the "disaffected nobility and gentry, together with the men he could bring along with him from Brae of Mar, and those that they can get to joyn them in the country as they come along. He advances through Perthshire, burning houses where the people will not attend him, picking up men one day who desert the next." It has been usual to attribute this tardiness either to incompetence or cowardice on his part, but we are in a position to show that he had a deep design in thus delaying his movements, and that his plot nearly concerned some of the chief characters in this history.

The Duke of Montrose was no favourite with Mar, for several reasons. He had succeeded to Mar's post under the Government, and it had thus become his duty to suppress the rebellion—a task which he was not unwilling to attempt. As the Earl approached the territories belonging to Montrose, therefore, he determined to play a bold and hazardous game against him. It may be presumed that the Duke had either been found incorruptible or too expensive for the Jacobites to purchase; but Mar thought that he might be able to reach his servants by bribery, and to turn them to the rebel ranks even without the authority of their master. Whilst encamped at Dunkeld he addressed a letter to Græme of Killearn—a worthy who has already become known to us—in which he tempted him by fair promises to bring over the retainers of the Duke to his own army, whilst his lord was in the south attending upon his office. This letter has not hitherto been intro-

duced amongst the Jacobite papers, and we print it here *in extenso* :—

“ From the Camp at Dunkeld,
27th September, 1715.

“ Sir,

“ You have now ane opportunitie in your hand of not only doing service to your King and countrie, but also a very remarkable one to yourself. I cannot doubt of your good wishes to your rightful King and your opprest country, and I know the interest you have with my Lord Montrose’s men, friends, and following; and now, in his absence, what can you doe better for the service of all then being instrumentall in getting them to joyn the King’s forces when wee come into your neighbourhead, which I hope will be ere long. I have already sent ane order to most of them in his majestie’s name for this effect, but your hearty concurrence and joyning with them will, I know, very much forward it, and will be doing what is expected of one of your name and familie. This is all I need trouble you with now, for sure ther needs not many arguments to persuade any belonging to, or having interest in, the familie of Montrose to joyn heartilie in that cause which has made the name soe famous, and especiallie nou when all that’s dear to mankind is joyned with it, and if lost at this tyme must be soe for ever.—I am, sir,

“ Your most obedient humble servant,

“ MAR.

“ To the Laird of Killearn.”

Graeme received the above letter at an inauspicious moment. The camp at Strath Fillan, which the Macgregors had formed, had been augmented by the clansmen of Glengarry and Clan Ranald, and as Mar required the services of Rob Roy to guide his army in their dangerous position, he sent a hasty summons to him on the same day when he despatched this letter. Putting his men in order the chief, with Glengyle and Marchfield, prepared to join Breadalbane’s retainers and to accompany them to the camp at Dunkeld. Ere they departed, however, word had been brought him that some arms were concealed in the house of one of Montrose’s tenants near Aberfoyle, and Rob sent a small party southwards to capture

them, that he might take spoils so greatly needed with him to Dunkeld. The expedition was successful, and the Macgregors seized and bore away thirty guns, the property of their ancient foe.

News of this raid was brought to Græme at the same time as Mar's letter was delivered to him at the Kirk of Aberfoyle, and it may easily be judged that he was in no mood to listen to the charming of the rebel leader. He wrote off an angry epistle to the Duke of Montrose enclosing the dangerous missive he had received from Mar, and hastened back to Buchanan House to make arrangements for its defence. And whilst Mar was lingering by Dunkeld awaiting his reply, and expecting each day to hear that the western clans had risen to assist him, the golden opportunity which he had obtained was slipping away from his grasp, and he was perilling the lives of those who had already joined his standard.

We have no intention of detailing more of the history of the rebellion than is necessary to enable anyone to understand the actions and adventures of Rob Roy, and fear we may have tried the patience of our readers already by what may seem the irrelevant historical facts detailed in this chapter. Our purpose, however, is to show, as briefly as possible, how much this revolt turned upon the personal feelings and ambition of the nobles engaged upon *both* sides; and especially to bring the characters of those men who exercised some influence upon Rob Roy's fate into bold relief. The materials which we have at command will enable us to throw much light upon several obscure passages in his history, and to clear away many of the imputations that have been cast upon him.

Finding that his loitering in the Dunkeld district was not advancing his cause, Mar at length entered Perth and established his headquarters there. The Duke of Argyll had checkmated the rebels by occupying Stirling with the main body of his army, but there is every likelihood that a corre-

spondent of Montrose is correct when he states that “the royal force is too weak to attack Mar, and should simply observe his movements.” The occupation of Stirling was a barrier in the way of an advance upon Edinburgh, and also prevented the junction of the Highland and Lowland rebels; but it placed Argyll in great personal danger, as the descent of the clans upon Stirling and Dunbarton shires would have cut him off from communication with his own western possessions. Mar was compelled, therefore, to hazard an invasion of East Lothian by crossing the Forth at Burntisland, and Argyll had to march with all speed to Edinburgh, as the insurgents threatened the capital. No conflict took place at that time, however, and the defenders of Edinburgh were negligent enough to suffer the rebels to pass westward to Seaton House, “leaving the pyper playing in the citadel” of Leith, which they had captured, to deceive the soldiers of Argyll. An urgent message recalled the Duke to Stirling, as it was reported that Mar was advancing upon that position with the whole of his forces. A policy of inaction was no longer possible. The Hanoverians had been treating the rebellion too lightly, believing that it was merely a ferment that would soon subside. Even so astute a warrior and statesman as the Earl of Stair had written to Montrose from Paris stating that he had no fear of its consequences. He admits that the rebels would be strong at first, but it would be merely a passing fervour.

“I would not indeed advize,” he writes, “to runn one’s head against them when they have their bellys fill of beef and their heads fill of strong beer. By the time they have layn a week under a hedge in the end of October or the beginning of Novr. it will be easie dealling with them.”

These anticipations had been falsified, and now Argyll found himself in a very critical position. The army of Mar was advancing upon him from the north, whilst the whole country south of the Forth was in a state of agitation. The

western clans had threatened his own Castle of Inverary, and it was believed that the Macdonalds were about to attack Glasgow and overrun Clydesdale. To oppose Mar’s army, numbering between eight and nine thousand, Argyll could only muster 3300 men, including volunteers, while the circuit whence he could draw his supplies was gradually narrowing. The Hanoverian prospects seemed hopeless enough against such odds ; and only reckless indiscretion on the part of their commander could ruin the Jacobite cause. Everything indicated that the hour of a decisive conflict was approaching.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BATTLE OF SHERIFFMUIR.

“ Now wad ye sing this double fecht,
Some fell for wrang, some fell for richt ;
And mony bade the world guid-nicht ;
Then ye may tell how pell and mell,
By red claymores and muskets' knell,
Wi' dying yell the Tories fell,
And Whigs to hell did flee, man.”

Sheriffmuir—REV. MR BARCLAY.

It was with considerable elation that the rebel army received orders to march from Perth to meet the enemy. The delay and inaction had told seriously upon them, not only by weakening their forces through desertion, but also by damping their martial ardour and enthusiasm ; and the prospect of shortly encountering their foes in a decisive conflict raised once more their drooping spirits. With light hearts, therefore, did they leave the ancient city of Saint Johnstoun, and march southwards with their banners streaming in the wind, and their pipes playing the pibrochs which had fired their ancestors in former days.

To ensure his success, Mar had lingered in Perth until he had gathered an army of overwhelming numbers, and he deemed that he had only to put his troops in motion so as to make his arms victorious. Rob Roy had engaged to lead them by safe and speedy paths to the southern portion of Stirlingshire, crossing the Forth at the Fords of Frew, and Mar doubted not but that he would thus be able to cut off all the communications with the south and west which Argyll had established. Fifeshire was almost entirely in the power of the rebels, and with the forces at his command it seemed possible for Mar to advance upon Stirling from all quarters, and to

annihilate the imperfect army which Argyll had to oppose to them. Unfortunately the Earl trusted entirely to the power of numbers, and made no allowance for the deeds of valour that a brave commander may accomplish when placed in a desperate situation. Had it been possible to corrupt the fidelity of Argyll at this time, there is every probability that the Hanoverian supremacy in Scotland would have been overthrown. But, to his credit, he remained steadfast to the cause which he had finally embraced, even in such discouraging circumstances as those that had arisen; and he determined to win renown by boldly opposing the handful of men at his command against the thousands whom Mar was leading southwards. The fatal battle of Sheriffmuir was the consequence of this resolution; and as we are enabled to give some particulars of this important conflict, from the letters of eyewitnesses, which differ from the usual historical accounts of it, we trust our readers will bear with us whilst we relate the true story of a battle in which Rob Roy played a prominent part.

On the morning of Thursday, 10th November 1715, Mar began his march from Perth, and, proceeding in his usual leisurely style, did not advance further south than Auchterarder—about fourteen miles from his starting-point. His men were quartered there for the night, and on the following morning his advance-guard was sent to take possession of Dunblane, whilst the main body of his army, under his own immediate care, marched to Ardoch. Ere they had completed this movement, however, the rebels had suffered severely from desertion. The Clan Fraser, numbering about four hundred men, had joined the standard of King James under the leadership of a chief who had only gained that position by marriage. When their hereditary chief, Simon Fraser of Lovat, commanded them to abandon the Jacobite cause they deserted in a body. The horsemen whom the Marquis of Huntly had brought from his own district con-

ceived that they had been oppressed by more than their share of campaign-duty, and two hundred of them also retired from Mar's army. The muster, nevertheless, was an imposing one, and far outnumbered all the troops that Argyll had at his disposal.

When intelligence of the advance from Perth was brought to Stirling, Argyll at once decided to risk an engagement, and hurriedly called out all the men he could venture upon the field. On Saturday morning the whole of his available force was on the march towards Dunblane, leaving as few men as possible in Stirling Castle, but keeping up his communication with it. As evening fell on that day he had reached Sheriffmuir, and, being unaware of the exact position of the rebels, he caused his men to lie close under arms through all that cold, wintry night to guard against surprise. At break of day on Sabbath his scouts discovered that Mar had been encamped only some two miles from him, and both armies were thus driven into an unexpected contest. The battle which ensued was one of the strangest recorded in history.

The left wing of Argyll's army was commanded by General Whitham; the centre and right wing by the Duke and General Wightman. Mar's right wing was composed of the clans, and was commanded by himself, and the chief work of the day fell upon it. The disposition of the two armies was very peculiar. Mar had the river Allan on his right, whilst his line extended towards the Ochil Hills. Between the two opposing forces lay a steep eminence, the possession of which would likely decide the day. Both Generals appreciated the value of this post, and by an almost simultaneous movement each began the ascent of the hill from opposite sides, out of sight of each other, but all making frantic efforts to gain the summit. The advantage was won by the rebels, for the Hanoverians found ere they could draw up in line "the enemy appearing just in form of battell at the top of the Hill, having run up every foot." The onset of Mar's Highlanders was

terrific. Rushing impetuously down the steep, they threw away their unfamiliar muskets, and strove to come to close quarters with the foe. The line of the left wing was soon broken by the claymores of the rebels, and General Whitham, losing his head, gave way, and fled precipitately with his men from the field towards Stirling. Argyll had thus only his centre and right wing to oppose to an unbroken force made frantic by victory. All depended now upon the courage and bravery of his cavalry, and they did not disappoint him. Their repeated assaults upon the Highlanders composing Mar's left wing were at last successful, and the plaided warriors, unused to orderly fighting, retired in confusion before the steady onslaught of Argyll's tried horsemen. The situation of the combatants at this time was very strange. The left wings of both armies had been defeated, whilst the centres and right wings were intact and flushed with the glory of conquest, but neither pursued the advantage each had gained. Argyll could not spare his men to chase a flying enemy, lest the tide of battle should turn against him; and the Highlanders under Mar were so ignorant of warfare of this description that they preferred remaining inactive upon the field to routing the enemy in detail. The power which Mar had over them was very limited, since each clan looked upon the commands of its own chief as superior to every other. Subordination, such as we find in regular armies, was quite unknown; and each chief followed his own special tactics as though there were no superior commander. Argyll's army—or that remnant left to him—though small, was thoroughly under his control, and he made the best possible use of it; but had the Highlanders united to attack him in the rear whilst he was engaged driving a portion of Mar's troops before him, the contest would have been hopeless upon his part. Such an attempt, however, was not made; and when Argyll returned from the pursuit he found that though the main body of the rebel army was unsubdued, no attempt was made to engage

or intercept him. The rebels who had routed General Whitham, and driven him back precipitately towards Stirling, remained inactive when Argyll confronted them, and suffered him quietly to retreat in the same direction, and to reunite his broken line. Either from timorousness and incapacity on his part, or insubordination in the army of which he was the nominal leader, Mar lost every advantage which he had gained, and retired to Auchterarder, practically defeated by a force much inferior to his own.

The question as to which party won the day at Sheriffmuir has never been thoroughly decided; although the fact that Argyll had checked the rebel army with the limited resources at his command seems to leave the award of victory with him. It is at least certain that the news of the defeat sustained by the rebels on the same day at Preston, in England, effectually prevented Mar from utilising his dubious victory "on the banks of Allan Water." The Hanoverian ballad-makers made merry over the doubtful field in which both parties had attained a limited success, and some of their productions have become classical.

"There's some say that we wan,
Some say that they wan,
Some say that nane wan at a', man;
But ae thing I'm sure,
That at Sheriffmuir
A battle there was that I saw, man.
And we ran, and they ran,
And they ran, and we ran,
And we ran and they ran awa', man."

Rob Roy had been entrusted with the command of a body of Macphersons as well as his own clansmen, and he had shared in the impetuous charge made by the right wing upon the unfortunate General Whitham. It is now impossible to tell who checked their pursuit of the flying Hanoverians, or by whose orders they remained idly upon the Hill of Kippendavie, when Argyll was suffered to pass unmolested. Rob's enemies have

freely accused him of being guilty of this negligence, and have not scrupled to assign unworthy motives for it. They maintain that "in the confusion of an undecided field of battle he enriched his followers by plundering the baggage and the dead on both sides;" and the ballad-monger whom we have already quoted states that—

" Rob Roy he stood watch
On a hill for to catch
The booty, for aught that I saw, man ;
For he ne'er advanced
From the place he was stanced
Till nae mair was to do there at a', man."

But it will be evident that to suppose that Rob Roy could command the right wing of Mar's army to advance upon Argyll is to imagine that he was vested with a power over them which none of the other chiefs associated with him possessed, and which belonged exclusively to the General to whom that wing was entrusted. To have directed his own little troop to attack the centre and right wing of Argyll's army would have been little short of madness, unless he had been sure of support from his comrades. The statement that he plundered the dead upon "*both sides*" is unsupported by evidence, and is so contradictory to the whole course of action which he had followed during the rebellion that it may be at once dismissed as incredible. Nor can any greater value be placed upon the further charge brought against him that he had been acting as a spy upon the rebel army and sending full accounts of their proceedings to Argyll. His relations with the Duke at this time were anything but friendly, as we have shown ; and we shall yet have to expose overtures made towards him by some of the Whig leaders—rivals of Argyll—which show that they did not believe him to be the creature of that nobleman. Thus his own detractors make too much of Rob Roy so that they may destroy his reputation, and credit him with a power in the rebel army which he never

possessed in order to criminate him. He had staked everything upon the success of the rebellion, and to have trifled with the Whigs at this time would have been to play a most dangerous game, and to merit the sufferings which he afterwards endured. And, had he been in the pay of Argyll, as some of his calumniators have supposed, he would have contrived some more effectual method of delivering the rebels into his hands, nor suffered Sheriffmuir to be a drawn battle.

Mar's retreat to Perth by Auchterarder was a precipitate one. So rapidly did the troops move that it really seemed little else than a flight, although there was no enemy pursuing them. The rebel leader in his haste left some of his artillery behind him, and a kind of panic seems to have overtaken his followers and caused them to conduct their backward movement in a very unworthy manner. The smallness of Argyll's army made it necessary that he should retreat with speed upon Stirling, which formed his base of operations; but the remnant of Mar's forces still greatly exceeded those opposed to it, and he was without excuse for his precipitancy. The ballad to which we have referred describes the situation with more energy than elegance—

“So there such a race was,
As ne'er in that place was,
And as little chase was at a', man;
Frae ither they ran,
Without touk o' drum,
They did not make use o' a paw, man.”

Instead of deserting to the army of Argyll, as he would naturally have done had he been in his employ, Rob Roy shared the disgrace of this retreat, and adhered to the standard of revolt when it seemed doubtful that it could be advanced successfully against the foe.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SKIRMISH AT CRIANLARICH.

“ But first you must come tell to me
If friends or foes you be ;
I fear you are Montrose’s men,
Come frae the north countrie.”

—*The Battle of Philiphaugh.*

It would be tedious to delay our narrative so as to trace the failure and defeat of Mar’s rebellion, and we shall therefore only touch upon those incidents and episodes in which our hero was engaged. No trustworthy account of his life during this period has yet been written, and, as we have been compelled to trace his career from stray documents and letters scattered throughout the country, our story may have a more disjointed appearance than is quite desirable. But we have endeavoured to attain to accuracy rather than elegance, and this is an entirely new element in a history of Rob Roy.

After his retreat towards Perth confusion prevailed in the councils of the Earl of Mar. Though he sent forth gazettes as mendacious as any ever published by Buonaparte, and boldly claimed a victory at Sheriffmuir though he had rapidly retreated from it, the Scottish people were not deceived by his audacity, but saw plainly that if the rebellion was to succeed another General must be at the head of affairs. It was impossible by any amount of blatant pretence to deceive them as to the ominous fact that the Duke of Argyll had bravely returned to the scene of the conflict on the day after Mar’s pretended victory, and found no enemy to oppose him, nor aught to do save to appropriate the artillery which the *victorious* Mar had left behind him in his hasty “strategic movement.” An attempt had been made to fortify the city of Perth, but

this important work had been entrusted to incompetent hands, and was never completed. Mar strove to excuse his retreat by declaring that sufficient provision had not been made for his army to justify him in advancing ; but everyone knew that the pursuit of Argyll's fugitive army would have led him into the Carse of Stirling, than which there are few parts of Scotland more fertile. These shallow pretexts imposed upon no one, and gradually wrought the destruction of the rebellion by undermining the faith of the rebels in the leader who had proved himself to be so incompetent.

Adversity has always the effect of bringing into view either the pettiness or the nobility of a man's nature ; and the severe reverses which Mar had endured now disclosed the weakness of his character. It had been one of his favourite tactics to divert the attention of Argyll from the advance of the rebels by attacking his opponent's possessions in the West Highlands ; and, at this juncture, instead of assembling his forces and swooping down upon the partially discomfited Duke, he descended to execute a trivial revenge upon him by resuming his designs against the private property of Argyll. A band consisting of some of the Macdonnells and Macleans had already attacked Inverary and been repulsed ; and Mar determined to send reinforcements to them, and direct them to renew the contest. For such a service few men in his army were better fitted than Rob Roy, and to him the Earl confided his purpose. Working upon his knowledge of the offence which Macgregor had given the Duke by his treatment of his kinsman, Mar represented to him that by an expedition against Argyll he would be able to assist the Jacobite cause, and gratify at the same time his private revenge for the sufferings of his forefathers, besides preventing by anticipation the chastisement which the Duke intended to inflict. Rob Roy was human, and fell into the snare so artfully prepared for him. He selected a hundred of his best men to accompany him, and set forth from Perth by pathways with which he was

well acquainted, purposing to meet the Macdonnells either at Lochearnhead or in Glenfalloch.

This march lay through districts which had either declared for the Pretender, or decided to hold themselves aloof ; and only here and there throughout the whole country which he traversed did he encounter any opposition. Drummond Castle had been fortified in the Hanoverian interest, and a few strongholds of the Whig Lords were upheld against the rebels ; but these Rob Roy carefully avoided, and by circuitous routes strove to reach the trysting-place. When he approached the territories of his ancient foe Montrose, however, he could hardly resist the temptation to visit the scenes of his former exploits ; and he came down through the western portion of Stirlingshire by Aberfoyle, and led his men southward towards the Clyde. He designed marching near Buchanan House, the seat of the Duke of Montrose—then under the care of Græme of Killearn—thinking that the news of a victory at Sheriffmuir might have induced his old enemy to consider Mar's letter favourably and to join the rebels. Græme had heard of his approach, and contrived to meet him, but for a very different purpose from that which he had anticipated.

Our readers may remember that during the time that Argyll was hesitating over the proposals of the Jacobites, and had not thoroughly declared for the House of Hanover, Montrose had endeavoured to bribe Rob Roy to betray him ; but his temptations had been treated with the scorn and contempt which they deserved (see chap. VII.). Since that period Argyll had sufficiently testified his devotion to the new dynasty by leading their troops against the rebels ; and one would have thought that further proof of his loyalty could hardly be required. His very success, however, had only served to incense Montrose the more against him ; and, fearing that his own power in Scotland would decrease as the military glory of Argyll advanced, he determined once more to try the faith

of Rob Roy, and tempt him again to treachery. Rob's circumstances were seriously altered now from what they were when his last attempt had been made. He was a rebel who had borne arms against the King, he was an outlaw both by civil and political proclamations, and his life, as a member of the proscribed Clan Gregor, and still more as the chief and leader of them, was placed within the power of the meanest of King George's subjects. Availing himself of these facts, Montrose thought that he would be able to persuade him to betray Argyll into his hands, that he might rise to the foremost place in Scotland upon the ruin of his rival.

This was the important message with which Græme of Killearn was entrusted, and for the delivery of which he met Rob Roy at Buchanan House. It may be imagined that these two men could not meet without considerable emotion. The Highland chief must have felt it difficult to suppress his rising wrath when he found himself in the presence of the man who had brought disgrace and desolation upon his family and homestead; and when the Lowland factor encountered the desperate rebel at the head of his reckless clansmen, and remembered how deeply he had wronged him, he would doubtless regret that he had been sent upon so dangerous a mission. But the orders of his master, the Duke of Montrose, were imperative, and he was compelled to obey them, though astonished at his own temerity.

If the meeting was a strange one, its results were not less marvellous. Each had met the other expecting to find him willing to commit an act of treachery, and both were disappointed. Rob Roy thought that the letter which Mar had sent to Græme had been effectual in prompting him to lead the men of Montrose to the Jacobite party; whilst Græme never doubted that the promises of pardon and fortune which he was commissioned to offer as the price of Argyll's betrayal would be gladly accepted by the chief. Both, however, were grievously disappointed. It was with some chagrin that Rob

Roy learned that the hopes which Mar had entertained of seducing Græme were unfounded; but, as the Laird of Killearn unfolded to him his proposals regarding Argyll, his surprise and disappointment gave place to indignation. He had already refused to betray the Duke when there was some truth in the accusation of Jacobite leanings on his part; and the suggestion that he should volunteer information against him, following out the details of a trumped-up story devised by Montrose, only provoked him to anger. It was true that, however friendly Argyll had been to him once, he was now his foe; but Macgregor would scorn to take such a mean advantage even of an enemy as that to which Græme tempted him, whilst he could meet him honourably on the field of battle. The treachery to which Mar had urged Græme had at least the appearance of loyalty towards the ancient House of Stuart to recommend it; and, while the service expected from Rob Roy had no flavour of chivalry about it, there was not associated with it even so trifling a reward as would have won an Italian desperado to commit such villany. The conference was abruptly closed, therefore, and the parties separated, mutually dissatisfied with each other, to meet under more romantic circumstances. Rob Roy felt that he dare not longer trust himself in the presence of one who thought so meanly of him as to tempt him to dishonour, lest he should strike him to the earth for his presumption.

No sooner had Rob Roy left Buchanan House than a messenger from Mar overtook him with fresh orders from that General which made him change his plan. Intelligence had reached the rebels at Perth that the Pretender—their King James III.—had actually embarked at Dunkirk for Scotland, and was on his way thither to place himself at the head of the rebel army. Mar had abandoned his intention of attacking Argyll's Castle of Inverary, and thought that Rob Roy would be better employed skirmishing, without any definite plan, throughout Stirlingshire, so as to keep up the appearance of a

Jacobite agitation in that quarter until some important victory had been gained. The conducting of this guerrilla campaign was left entirely to his own discretion, the only condition laid upon him being that he should do as much damage as possible to the Whig Lords and Lairds in the locality. Perhaps no more congenial task could have been set to him, and he began at once to put it in execution. Marching to the shores of Loch Lomond by the banks of Endrick Water, he led his men through all the district which had lately been traversed by the Whig invaders of Craigrostan, and once more abode beneath the roof of his own fort of Inversnaid in safety, though in the midst of a hostile territory. His force was not strong enough to engage any such body of troops as would be sent against him, however, so he could not linger here. We are enabled to trace his route by a letter addressed to the Duke of Montrose by Charles Mortland, from Glasgow, and dated 9th December 1715. It is there stated that "on Wednesday morning (7th December), between one and two o'clock, Rob Roy arrived with 100 men at Drummon [Drymen], marching through Buchanan to Craigrostan without attempting anything upon the garrison of Drummakill, and having done little at Drummon but proclaimed the Pretender and tore the gauger's books." However ineffectual his actions might be, his very presence in the neighbourhood had spread alarm amongst the retainers and farmers under Montrose, and as he had twice spurned the wiles of that nobleman to lead him to treachery, Græme of Killearn determined, in the absence of his chief, to take vengeance upon him again. Ill-fortune dogged his footsteps, however, as we shall briefly show.

Immediately after his futile interview with Rob Roy, Græme summoned as many of his men together as he could spare from the defence of Buchanan House, and set out in pursuit of Macgregor, accompanied by a small detachment of military from the neighbouring garrison. He judged rightly that Rob would not be so near Loch Lomond without visiting

his own place of Craigrostan ; and towards it, therefore, he directed the march of his tiny army. The men under his command did not exceed a hundred, including the military ; but he trusted to surprising the Macgregors in some remote place, and insuring their destruction by the rapidity of his onslaught. By a forced march he reached Craigrostan, only to find that the place was deserted, that Inversnaid was abandoned, and that those whom he had thought to entrap were escaped away beyond his reach. Minute inquiries in the neighbourhood led him to believe that they had taken the road to the north, and he succeeded in tracking them to Strath Fillan. At this point Rob Roy had divided his band, sending the larger portion of them eastward by Glen Dochart upon a marauding expedition under his lieutenant, Alastair Roy Macgregor, whilst he remained with about twenty of his men at Crianlarich Inn to await their return. Græme thus found his enemy delivered into his hand by a stroke of special good fortune.

The pursuers arrived at the cross-roads of Crianlarich early in the morning, having followed closely upon the trail of the Macgregors through a portion of the night. Rob Roy had taken up his quarters in the Inn, whilst his followers had been accommodated in one of the outhouses adjacent to it, as they did not anticipate an attack at this time. Thus circumstances seemed still further to favour Græme, and he took advantage of them. Directing a number of his men to close and guard the gates of the barn where the Macgregors lay, he advanced towards the door of the Inn, and summoned Rob Roy to surrender. The reply he received was a bold and insulting defiance, and he ordered some of his men to go forward and seize upon the traitor and rebel. This was no easy task, however. The door of the Inn was narrow, and would not admit of the entrance of more than one soldier at a time, and Macgregor, by the exercise of that agility and strength which had made him famous, felled each intruder to the ground as he entered, filling up the doorway with their bleeding and in-

sensible forms. Five of his assailants had thus been overthrown, and the tumult had waxed so loud that the Macgregors had taken the alarm, and by one united effort had burst the doors of their prison, and rushed forth impetuously upon the enemy, shouting the ancient slogan of the clan—"E'en do but spare nocht!"

The Grahams, finding it dangerous to advance and difficult to retreat, fled precipitately from the spot, leaving many of their comrades behind them disabled. Rob Roy recalled his men from the pursuit, and, seeing the excessive numbers opposed to him, withdrew to a neighbouring height, so that he might have the advantage of the higher ground. When his assailants had rallied, and saw the small force which he had at his command, they advanced towards his position, expecting to make an easy conquest; but some of his best marksmen picked out the leaders with their matchlocks, and ere they had time to recover from this surprise the Macgregors attacked them furiously with their claymores, and compelled them to take refuge in flight. Dispersed and demoralised by the reverses which they had endured, they retired from the scene of conflict, nor could their commander induce them again to face so formidable a foe.

Rob Roy lost no time in joining the rest of his followers, lest the enemy should return in greater force than formerly and avenge their slaughtered comrades. To avoid a contest which might prove less fortunate than this last, he led his men towards Stirling and Falkirk, and did the Jacobite cause great service by boldly lifting some of the stores and cattle designed for the Hanoverian army at Stirling Castle from under the very eyes of their guardians. But the Grahams did not rally to oppose him again at this time; and he was destined to suffer for his boldness at other hands, and in a different quarter than he had anticipated.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ADVENT AND FLIGHT OF THE PRETENDER.

“ But now my love has gone to France,
To try his fortune to advance ;
If he e'er come back 'tis but a chance,
Is go de tu mo murnin slan.”

—*The Ballad of “Shule Aroon.”*

The retreat of Mar upon Perth with his army after the divided victory of Sheriffmuir formed the turning-point of the campaign. Every leader of experience knew that it was of the utmost importance that the main body of the insurgents should advance boldly to support the skirmishing parties scattered throughout the Lowlands south of the Forth, if the rebellion were to be in any degree successful. But here, at the very outset, the General who had undertaken to lead them to victory had retired after an engagement which was at the best doubtful, and, like Marshal Benedek in the Prusso-Austrian War, seemed to be absolutely “without a plan.” Discord and jealousy raged within the rebel camp, and many of the chiefs who had left their Highland homes, expecting by one bold action to effect the Restoration, began to fear that the Southrons would exact bitter retribution from them for the part they had taken in this futile expedition. And as their hopes of gain and glory faded away they began to meditate upon the best means of making their peace with the House of Hanover.

The modern Jacobite (if such an anomaly still exist) will scarcely credit the story of vileness and self-seeking which we are about to lay before our readers ; and were it not that the evidence we possess is irrefragable, we would ourselves

have preferred to think otherwise of the moving spirits in this romantic expedition. But we fear that the private documents from which we shall quote throw more light upon the actions of the prominent persons of the time than general histories of this incident afford. They show a depth of meanness and deception which will greatly shock the admirers of Jacobite ballad-literature.

The new King of England (George I.), unwilling to entrust the subjugation of Scotland to his unfamiliar English subjects, had given orders that a Dutch contingent should be sent to aid the Duke of Argyll in his extremity. The Earl of Sutherland meanwhile had remained steadfast to Whig principles, and was rapidly gathering an army in the north to descend upon the rebels; and the army of Mar, whilst stationed at Perth, midway between these opposing forces, was placed in great jeopardy. It would not have required a Tilly, a Wallenstein, or a Marlborough to have discovered this danger, and Mar was not unconscious of it; but his courage had evaporated after Sheriffmuir, and though he claimed the conquest there he secretly treated with the Hanoverians immediately afterwards.

Nor can we altogether blame him for this seeming treachery. He had done his utmost to raise the rebellion upon the understanding that the Chevalier De St George (call him King or Pretender as you will) should speedily come to Scotland to place himself at the head of the rebels. But month after month had flown, and still he came not. In a letter dated so far back as 21st June, 1715, it is stated "that the Highlanders had expected the Pretender in March, a second time before the middle of June, and they say they will give over all hopes of him for ever, if he be not with them before the hooke go into the corne." Now the summer was past, the harvest was ended, and still Scotland was not saved. The King for whom these hardy Scots were perilling their lives and fortunes had not deigned to show himself to them, and it is little wonder under these circumstances, that they despaired of success.

The modicum of faith which they had in Mar had been rudely dispelled, and as

“All in a ship-wracked shift their severall waye,”

so each petty chief in the Jacobite army strove to make the best bargain he could for himself and his followers. Gradually the magnificent array with which Mar had set forth from the north melted away, and every day of inactivity spent in Perth added to the defection of his chief supporters. It was in view of these desertions and their effect upon his army that Mar determined to secure an amnesty for himself and his deluded adherents, though at the hazard of his own reputation in all time coming. And this was the way in which he proceeded.

Amongst the Hanoverians taken prisoner at Sheriffmuir there was a certain Colonel Lawrence whom the rebels carried with them to Perth, and made much of, since he was the highest grade officer that had been captured. With inexcusable negligence they suffered him to see the lack of unity which existed among them, and he was permitted to examine leisurely the farcical attempts at fortification that they had made at Perth, and to estimate their total force with some approach to accuracy. Though thus intimately acquainted with the circumstances of the Jacobite party, this was the man whom they decided to send as an ambassador of peace to Argyll. It is only fair to say that Mar resisted the importunities of his subordinates upon this subject to the last, as he had certain information that the Pretender would shortly land in Scotland and place himself at the head of the movement; but he had shuffled, prevaricated, and, in short, lied so frequently to the chiefs on this point, that they believed him no longer, and practically supplanted him. He had raised a force which he could neither control with power nor abandon with credit, and he was forced to submit to the adverse fate which had befallen him.

That was an anxious time for the unhappy Earl of Mar. The turbulent northern chiefs who had urged him to advance now blamed his precipitancy, and those who had counselled the adoption of a cautious policy accused him of rashness. Many had insisted that their King should have been with them before any step for his establishment upon the throne had been taken, and now, when he assured them that their hereditary ruler was about to join them, they scoffed at his asseverations, and derided his attempts at maintaining the rebellion. The vaunted French succours had never arrived; even the French gold was slow in coming; and as for the King, the wheels of his chariots had tarried so long that they feared the worst had overtaken him. Unable to support this pressure from all sides upon him, the Earl of Mar, being merely a mediocre genius, succumbed to circumstances, and consented to forward overtures for peace and pardon to the Duke of Argyll by the hands of Colonel Lawrence.

The exact terms of these overtures cannot now be ascertained, but their tenor may be inferred from a letter which Charles Cokburne sent to the Duke of Montrose from Edinburgh on the 29th Nov. 1715. It is there declared that "Mar, by the consent of all the heads of his party, has sent proposals of peace through Colonel Lawrence. The report that Mar would be 18,000 strong in a few days, and that his aim now was to get back his deserters, is wrong. Perhaps, however, he is looking after a better bargain, as was the policy of the rebels under King William in 1690." The writer of this note has no faith either in Mar or in his fellow-conspirators, and hopes "due regard will be had to the sufferings of honest people, that reparation may be made them out of the Rebels' Estats." Distrusted in this manner by both parties, only a "heaven-born" general could have succeeded. With one-half the number of men which Mar had under his control the great Marquess of Montrose would have won the crown for his royal master; but betwixt Mar and Montrose there was a

great gulf fixed. And when Argyll saw the leader of a superior army cringing at his feet, 'tis slight marvel that he despised the suppliant, and rejected his prayer. Colonel Lawrence returned to Perth, in accordance with his parole, after his unsuccessful mission, and Mar was thus placed in the critical situation of a general at the head of an army which would neither fight nor fly.

We can hardly believe that Mar thoroughly acquiesced in these peace-proposals himself, since he knew that the Pretender was about to land in Scotland; and it is evident that those with whom he treated had no faith in his sincerity. The writer whom we have already quoted, in a note dated a month later, informs the Duke of Montrose of his suspicions in these remarkable words:—"I could lay before your grace so many peeces of management which demonstrate there was no ingenuity [ingenuousness] with the proposers, that the proposals was worse (if possible) than their Rebellion." With such opinions current amongst his enemies, it could hardly be expected that Mar's propositions would succeed.

It was precisely at this awkward juncture, when his supporters could neither advance nor recede, that the evil fortune of the Stuart race drove James VIII. to the inhospitable shores of Scotland. His advent then was a melancholy one. Instead of bringing the galleys filled with French warriors, and the argosies overflowing with Continental wealth, which Mar had so liberally promised, the Claimant to the British throne was really a fugitive, expelled from France and forbidden in Holland; deprived of the precarious support he had received by the death of his *quasi*-patron, Louis XIV., and denounced as an enemy by the Regent-Duke of Orleans. He had been forced to escape from French territories disguised as a fisherman, and had taken shipping at Dunkirk in a vessel provided for him, where he maintained his *incognito* until he reached his native land. The magnificent fleet with which he invaded Scotland consisted of three fishing sloops, one of

which carried "Cæsar and his fortunes," and the other two contained a few of his exiled supporters, and his own personal baggage. The winds and the waves prevailed against them, and they were parted, the first sloop being driven as far north as Peterhead, and the last being wrecked off the coast, and going, with its kingly treasures,

"To swell the vast spoils that are held by
The fathomless sea."

This was an ominous beginning for a triumphal progress through the kingdom.

The ports on the east coast from the Tay to the Tweed had been closely watched to prevent the landing of the Pretender, but it was currently reported that a secret understanding existed between him and Admiral Byng, who had charge of this duty, that he should be suffered to pass to the north. On the 22d of December 1715 the heir of the Stuarts landed at Peterhead, and prepared to conquer Scotland. The course which he took is thus described by a contemporary historian :—

"He and his five companions having lodged one night in the Habit of Sea-Officers, at Peterhead, and another at Newburgh, a House of the Earl of Marischal, on the 24th they passed incognito thro' Aberdeen, with two Baggage Horses, and at night came to Fetteresso, the principal Seat of the Earl of Marischal, where he stayed till the 27th, when the Earls of Mar, Marischal, and Hamilton came up to wait on him."

Whatever feeling of shame and sorrow Mar may have felt when kissing the hand of his royal master, he succeeded in disguising his sentiments; and, as everything of a superior caste was tinged with sham classicism in those days, he finished his address to the King with a mutilated verse from Horace, thus "Engleshed" by a contemporary poetaster :—

"This day, a Glorious holyday,
Drives all my fears and gloomy cares away,
No threatning clouds shall hence disturb my rest,
No fear of violent death shall rack my breast,
While royal James does Britain's sceptre sway
This day shall be to me a holy day."

Despite all this Roman devotion, however, the fact could not long be concealed from James that his protracted absence and the incompetence of his generals had ruined his cause ; and he learned with both grief and astonishment that it had been decided to abandon Perth, and to retire still further north. Instead of boldly facing his difficulties as became a King, he could think of no expedient for the restoration of his dynasty save making tawdry processions from place to place in the kingdom, expecting the inhabitants to fall down at once before him. Like his father and grandfather, he believed firmly in "the right divine of kings," and like them, too, he was about to endure a rude awakening.

The course which he followed may be understood from the description given of it by Rae, the historian of the Rebellion ; and, as it exhibits both the weakness and folly of the Jacobites, and thereby accounts for their downfall, we venture to quote it. The new year (1716) had begun ere James made any movement southward. "He went from Fetteresso to Brechin on Monday, 2d January ; stayed there till Wednesday, when he came to Kinnaird ; went to Glamis on Thursday, and on Friday, about eleven in the morning, he made his public entry into Dundee, with a retinue of about 300 men on horseback, having the Earl of Mar on his right and the Earl of Marischal on his left. His friends desiring it, he continued about an hour on horseback in the market-place, the people kissing his hand all the while ; he then went and dined at Stuart of Grandtully's, where he lodged that night. On Saturday he went from Dundee to Castle Lion, a seat of the Earl of Strathmore, where he dined, and after to Sir David Thriepland's, where he lodged. On Sunday he arrived at Scone, about two miles from Perth. On Monday, the 9th, he made his public entry into Perth, where he viewed some of the soldiers quartered in the town, and returned the same night to Scone."

This wandering up and down through districts devoted to

his service was not likely to advance his cause very rapidly, but he did not seem capable of any more serious campaign. The Jacobites endeavoured to create the impression that their newly-found monarch was a paragon of perfection; though there is very little evidence to support this notion. A private letter from the Countess of Lauderdale, dated 14th January 1716, states the case very fully in these terms—

“The Pretender,” she writes, “has lost all his luggage, but the Laird of Gairntillie has presented him with his gold and silver, and Lady Panmure has arranged his household affairs, so that Scoon House, where he is to live, is now well mounted. He is said to be a tall, lean, blak man, loukes half dead alreedy, very thine, long-faced, very ill-cullored, and melancholy; but the Jacobites declare him to be the handsomest man in the world, and the most metled; dos busenes to a wonder, and understands everything without being told.”

It was unfortunate that a man of such penetration required at this period to be told that his cause was already hopeless and rapidly becoming desperate; yet this was the case. The Dutch auxiliaries had arrived at Stirling, and Argyll, however willing to spare his countrymen, could not longer delay operations against them. General Cadogan, the friend and follower of Marlborough, was already on his way to the north, in possession of instructions which gave him extreme power there; so that Argyll was forced to move against the Jacobites, if he did not wish to be quite eclipsed. The insurgents had centred at Perth, with the exception of Rob Roy and his party, and a few other marauding companies who traversed the country doing such damage as they could to private property; and against this city, therefore, the operations of the Hanoverians were directed. Instead of advancing from the insecure shelter of the ancient burgh to check the movements of his enemies, James VIII. was content to remain there and issue futile proclamations, premature instructions for thanksgiving services, and pious commands to the

clergy to offer up special prayers for him. Whilst waiting thus for Divine interposition to place him in some miraculous manner upon the throne, the only measure of defence which he took appears to us a specially heartless one. The town of Auchterarder had afforded his army both shelter and sustenance beforetime, yet he ruthlessly commanded that it and other "loyal" hamlets betwixt Perth and Dunblane should be razed to the ground, the fields wasted, and the provender confiscated, lest they should minister to the support of his foes. The policy of a Prince who makes war upon his friends in case they should help his enemies cannot long be successful.

General Cadogan indulged in no such mimic warfare. His training on the Continent had steeled him against mercy, but he directed his power against those who were really opposed to him. The Kingdom of Fife, which the insurgents had at one time commanded, had been gradually wrested from them, and the General determined to expel them from that region altogether. The Castle at Burntisland was reinforced, the Earl of Rothes received assistance, and a collateral campaign was begun both in Fife and in Perthshire. Rob Roy had taken up his quarters at Falkland, and strove to sustain the sinking Jacobite cause by many daring exploits. His anger had been especially kindled against the mercenary warriors whom King George had brought from the Continent to subdue his northern subjects, and Rob lost no opportunity of harassing and annoying them. He commanded a force of about two hundred men, and with these he did much execution. But it was his evil fortune to provoke Cadogan by one daring action which brought the vengeance of that merciless General upon his head.

A party of Hanoverians, consisting of Swiss mercenaries and Lowland militia, had been stationed by Cadogan in the Tower of Balgonie—an ancient edifice belonging to the Earl of Leven, and situated on an eminence overlooking the River Leven, near Markinch. The intention of the General was to

advance his line towards the sea-coast, and then by a northern march to drive the insurgents back towards Perth or Dundee ; and Balgonie, though a place of no great strength, was needful to him for this purpose. Rob Roy was on the alert, however, and checkmated this move effectually. He brought a strong party of his men from Falkland, and laid siege to Balgonie. The contest was brief, and he soon took the castle, capturing all its defenders, and leaving it partially dismantled and in ruins. Some time elapsed ere Cadogan heard of this incident. The place was of slight importance in itself, but his plans had been disturbed by its capture, and he vowed to be deeply revenged upon the Highland cateran who had successfully outwitted him. How he executed his vow we shall relate hereafter.

The boldest deeds which Rob Roy could achieve, however, were powerless to avert the disaster which impended over the Jacobites. The news of Argyll's advance upon Perth struck terror to the hearts of King James and his redoubtable General, the Earl of Mar, and, in spite of the remonstrances of the Highland chiefs, they determined to abandon the city and retreat to the north. The weakness and selfishness of the King became visible to all around him, and even those who remained to defend him regarded him with contempt. Forgetful of the brave men who had suffered and died for him already, he could think only of his personal safety, and plotted to secure his own escape, regardless of the fate waiting his adherents. The Earl of Mar was loaded with reproaches, and the pusillanimous King, with tears in his eyes, accused his counsellors of having brought him to a grave and not to a throne in this desolate and unhappy kingdom. It is needless for us to trace the steps of the insurgents as they marched northwards in this melancholy retreat ; nor shall we dwell upon the disgraceful method which King James took to elude his own followers and escape from them at Montrose, accompanied by the Earl of Mar. It

is sufficient for us to say that when the rebel army reached Aberdeen they found that they had neither a General to lead them nor a King to fight for, and there was nothing left for them but to disband, and to seek the refuge of their native hills. The weight of supporting the Stuart cause now fell upon Rob Roy and the western clans who had formed skirmishing parties similar to his, and its success in these circumstances could hardly be hoped for.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BURNING OF AUCHINCHISALLAN.

“Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn
Thy banished peace, thy laurels torn !
Thy sons, for valour long renowned,
Lie slaughtered on their native ground.
Thy hospitable roofs no more
Invite the stranger to the door ;
In smoky ruins sunk they lie,
The monuments of cruelty.”—*Smollett.*

Mal Cadogan, who now shared the command of the
rian army with the Duke of Argyll, soon showed the
that he was not a man to be trifled with. He followed
mating army from Perth to Dundee, and would speedily
ertaken and routed the insurgents had not the Duke,
of saving his fugitive countrymen from slaughter,
d to throw several impediments in the way of his
, so as to delay his march till the rebels should escape.
had been trained in a rough school, beneath the care
uke of Marlborough, and could not understand the
y which his fellow-commander advocated ; so he
d that they should part company, that the Duke should
with one portion of the army near the coast, whilst he
ed inland with the remainder, to carry the fear of King
into the Highland homes of those who had dared to
ainst him. Striking westward through Perthshire, he
his course for Fort William, then under the command
Robert Pollok of that Ilk, designing to terrify the
chiefs who still held out against the Government by
ing within their own territories.

ask was not so easy as he had imagined. The town
tle of Inverness had been in the hands of the Macin-
who stood for King James, and it was with difficulty
bes of Culloden regained it from them. That chief

frankly relates, in one of his letters to Montrose, that but for the perfidy and treachery of Lord Lovat to the cause of the Pretender, he would have attacked the castle in vain. The country of the Macdonalds was in an uproar, and their two great chiefs, Keppoch and Glengarry, had resolutely refused to surrender to the Governor of Fort William. Towards this spot, therefore, Cadogan directed his march, determined to stamp out the rebellion by any means. Sir Robert Pollok had repeatedly written to the members of the Government, urging them to take severe measures against the rebels, and stating his opinion that "the only sufficient course would be not only to disarm all the country, but also to burn the houses and destroy the cattle." This counsel, however, had been rejected by Argyll, who could not bring himself to treat his fellow-countrymen with such barbarity. But no such tenderness was felt by Cadogan, and he readily adopted Pollok's suggestion. Unable to cope with the clansmen upon the ground which was so familiar to them, but with which he was little acquainted, he gave orders that his soldiers should abandon the sword and take the incendiary's torch as their weapon of warfare. The sad incident of Glencoe was repeated on all sides. The Swiss mercenaries and Dutch auxiliaries, untroubled by humane scruples, faithfully executed his orders; and the wives and children of the Macdonalds were cast forth homeless into the world, whilst their peaceful hamlets were devoted to the flames.

The method which Pollok advocated, however ruthless, proved effectual. Many of the clansmen came to Fort William and yielded up their arms; and at length the chiefs, unable longer to continue this unequal warfare, surrendered themselves and took the oath of allegiance. As Cadogan had found this plan to succeed beyond his expectation he continued to practise it, and thus

"With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide."

When he had subdued that part of the kingdom the General took his way southwards, traversing the territory of Breadalbane, and wreaking his vengeance upon that nobleman by evicting his tenants, destroying their hamlets, and confiscating their goods and cattle. The wily Breadalbane had delayed joining the rebels until his aid was useless to them, and he had now to pay the penalty of his dilatoriness without having gained anything by his treason. Finlarig Castle had been left with but a slight force to protect it, and was easily captured and garrisoned by the Hanoverians, and as Balloch (Taymouth) Castle was also in their hands, they could command the whole valley of Loch Tay, and the principal glens which led from it. Cadogan's homeward march thus promised to be a victorious one.

During all this time Rob Roy had been leading his men from place to place in the north Lowlands, never remaining long in one locality, but appearing in spots where he was least expected, and harassing the Whig lairds of Fife and Stirlingshire almost beyond endurance. His name had become a terror throughout the land, like that of the "Black Douglas" long before, and those who could not resist the strength of his arm cultivated his favour or purchased his protection. Success had attended him in most of his expeditions, and as he had an understanding with the leading western chiefs that the war was to be carried on in the absence of King James, he performed his portion of the contract faithfully. But the westward march of Cadogan disturbed him greatly. He could not tell how long the clans would be able to hold out if they were prevented from uniting their forces, and if the General attacked them in detail there was no hope of victory. He determined to take up his position near his old home among the Braes of Balquidder, and to watch the course of events from that point of vantage.

Meanwhile Cadogan learned with grim satisfaction that the home of the bold outlaw who had spoiled his campaign in Fife

by seizing the Tower of Balgonie was in the immediate neighbourhood of Finlarig Castle. The deeds of violence which Rob Roy had committed since that time had also been related to him, and it seemed as if a brilliant opportunity were to be afforded him of taking ample vengeance upon the chief without danger to himself. He had shown himself a brave soldier upon many a bloody field, but he did not scruple to war with women and children when massacre and arson served his purpose. He directed, therefore, that a party of his foreign troops should be sent to Rob Roy's house in Breadalbane to seize upon his property and expel his family from their homestead.

The house of Auchinchisallan was situated in Glen Dochart, about three miles south-west from Killin. Though not of any great extent, it had been sufficient to enable Mary Macgregor to support her family frugally during the protracted absence of her husband; and many memories already clustered around it to endear this home to her. It was the spot where she had found refuge after her expulsion from Balquidder, and to which she had returned, as to a haven of safety, when Craighrostan was threatened. Here she had seen her children growing up to boyhood in this rural retreat, secure, she fondly hoped, from war's alarms; and here she trusted to spend the remainder of her days in rustic tranquillity. But the dark clouds of misfortune were gathering around her, and were soon to burst in fury upon her devoted head.

Rob Roy had sent a portion of his band under his kinsman, Alastair Roy Macgregor, to his own place of Craighrostan, directing him to take possession of it and to fortify Inversnaid. He remained himself at Strath Fillan with only a few men as a vidette party, keeping watch over the movements of Cadogan and his Hanoverian army, and paying occasional visits to his wife and family at Auchinchisallan. Whilst in this situation he received sure intelligence that Cadogan had ordered an incendiary party to attack his house and burn it to

the ground. He dispatched an urgent message at once to Alastair, ordering him to come immediately with all his available force to Strath Fillan; and, to guard against surprise, he posted some of his own followers in ambush around Auchinchisallan, but directing them to reserve their fire. His wife and children he sent, under the charge of three clansmen, to his nephew's house of Glengyle, whilst he waited himself with his ambuscade in Glen Dochart.

Fortune was distinctly against him on this occasion. The notice which he had received of the intended attack had been too brief, and his men from Craigrostan, though brought with all possible speed, were too late for the fray. The mercenaries, led by a native guide from amongst the Campbells of Argyll, descended upon Rob's homestead, seized upon his undefended property, and wantonly burned such household gear and plenishing as they thought of too little value to carry away. The band was much larger than he had expected, and he found that he could not safely oppose them face to face. Had his own troop been complete he would have ventured boldly even with the odds which would still have been against him, but Alastair tarried long upon his journey, and the Swiss were expert foragers. Often had Rob Roy led *creagh* and raid, but never had he witnessed one so melancholy. At length his patience could no longer endure. His home was in ashes, his goods were disappearing from his sight, and he could not refrain from striking a blow for them, though it were but for revenge. Setting his musket to his shoulder, he took aim at the Swiss leader and fired. The signal was understood by his hidden clansmen, and twelve shots followed in quick succession, each bullet laying one of the enemy low. Immediately after firing the Macgregors shifted from tree to tree, lest the smoke of their firearms should betray them, but some of them had been slow to move, and the volley from the Swiss muskets took deadly effect upon them. And still Alastair came not! To continue such unequal strife was more than even Rob Roy

could dare, and at a signal his men retired, leaving the mercenaries masters of the field. The Swiss had received orders to advance to Glengyle when they had spoiled Auchinchisallan, but as they could not gauge the force opposed to them, nor estimate the resistance which they would have to encounter, they deemed it safer to retrace their steps to Finlarig Castle, taking their dead and wounded with them. And Rob Roy had to stand by and see his cattle driven off before his eyes, and feel some of the pangs which he had often inflicted upon his victims. One reflection consoled him, however—his wife had been saved on this occasion from the insults and brutalities which had made them both implacable foes to Whigs and Whiggery.

Returning to Strath Fillan, Rob waited the tardy advance of Alastair with his hardy band; but they came too late even for vengeance. Fearing that the next attack of the Hanoverian troops would be upon Glengyle, he led his clansmen rapidly forward in that direction, and, taking his wife and family once more under his care, he marched thence to his own house of Craigrostan. As a partial reprisal for the "spulzie" which he had suffered, he caused a band of his followers to descend upon Duntreath and lift a sufficient number of sheep to enable him to maintain his men for some time on the shores of Loch Lomond. The raid was successfully accomplished, and Rob Roy was again in possession of his own dwelling, with a goodly array of clansmen to defend it for him.

This is the true story of the burning of Auchinchisallan. Much doubt has hitherto been cast upon its details, and some sceptical writers have rejected the incident as untrustworthy. But we are enabled to bring forward incontrovertible proof of the accuracy of the version we have given, and from a quarter which places it above suspicion. We shall quote the letter (not hitherto available for this purpose) in which Græme of Killearn relates the story to his kinsman, Mungo Græme of Gorthie, and from what they know of the writer we believe

our readers will exonerate him from the charge of favouritism towards Rob Roy.

“ Killern, 11th April 1716.

“ Sir,—I was enquiring about Rob Roy’s story, which is (as it comes from his own freinds) that on Wedenesday last he was informed that a partie was to be sent from Finlarig to his house, he sent of ane express immediatlie to his people in Craigrostan to come as quicklie to his assistance as they could, and thought fitt to absent himself when the party came, because he found he had not force enough to resist. The partie caryed of his whole plenishing and goods (except a feu wild beasts that run away with the fying), and burnt all his houses save one little barn. But Robert was not able to bear all this without attempting some revenge. Therefor with a feu of these he could gett readiest (his Craigrostan folks not having tyme to come up) he fyled from some rocks and passes upon the partie, and killed two or three, and has wounded ten or twelve, ther’s lykwise one of his killed and severall wounded, but all the booty was carryed of. This is the most distinct account of the matter that I have yett gott. Nou its certain this partie has not been commanded by P. Robison, for they returned to Finlarig; for if it had been Robison he would have marched to Glenguyle, soe that you see that concert has failed, wherefor its most necessar you consider hou to make neu applications to the Generall to take a course with these villains, whose insolence is not to be born any longer. They have just nou stolen a good deall of sheep of the Muir of Blane above Duntreth, and daylie threatens more mischief to all the country.”

This letter does more than merely confirm the statement as to the burning of Rob Roy’s domicile. It discloses a deeply-laid scheme for the overthrow of the power of the Macgregors in that country. Several letters directed to the Duke of Montrose give particular accounts of the battle of Sheriffmuir, and “ Peter Robison” is repeatedly alluded to in them, and we may safely conclude, therefore, that he was one of the officers in Argyll’s army devoted to the service of Montrose. From the remark made by Græme in the above letter it appears that

the writer intended Robison to accompany Cadogan to the west, and to lead him to destroy not only Rob Roy's house, but the seat of young Macgregor of Glengyle also. This dark design was foiled, however, as we discover incidentally from one of the "Sheriffmuir" letters. Robison had been wounded in the hand at that battle, and had remained at Stirling when the Hanoverian army marched northwards. Only one portion of this plot had been carried out, therefore, and that at considerable cost of life and limb to the Swiss soldiers of Cadogan. But the General could not delay at this time to take revenge upon him, as he had been urgently summoned to London by his chief, the Duke of Marlborough. Montrose had a bolder purpose in view than the ruin and extinction of a Highland cateran, and Cadogan's presence at Court was necessary to enable him to accomplish it.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DESTRUCTION OF GLENGYLE AND CRAIGROSTAN.

“ ‘Set fire to the house !’ quo’ the fause Gordon,
All wud wi’ dule and ire.”

—*The Ballad of Edom o’ Gordon.*

The position which the Duke of Montrose had obtained at the Court of George I. had enabled him to prosecute his evil intentions towards Argyll with ease. He had poisoned the mind of Marlborough against him, and tempted that jealous Duke to aid in his ruin ; and as the King could not afford to quarrel with the puissant Commander of his Forces, the hopes of Montrose seemed likely to be fulfilled, Nor did the reports of General Cadogan, regarding the leniency of Argyll towards the rebels, tend to soften the judgment of the Hanoverians upon him. He had been involved at first in the Jacobite plots, and his most powerful kinsman, the Earl of Breadalbane, was now entirely engaged with the rebels ; and Montrose made full use of these facts to prejudice the cause of his rival. So confident was he of the success of his scheme that he determined not only to deprive Argyll of his power in the north, by procuring his military degradation, but also to endeavour by any means to have him banished from the kingdom, and his estates forfeited as a traitor. Ere this could be done he must convict him of such treason as could neither be explained away nor condoned.

It may seem to us a strange thing that Montrose should attempt to cast the slur of treason upon the only Scottish general who had successfully resisted the rebels ; but the fact is unquestionable, and we are about to disclose another ramification of this deeply-laid scheme. Twice had Montrose

attempted to corrupt the fidelity of Rob Roy, and to make him betray Argyll, and though his efforts had been unblest, he did not despair. He persuaded Cockburne of Ormiston, the Lord-Justice General, to bring his influence to bear upon Macgregor, so that their mutual enemy, Argyll, might be removed from their path.

It was no simple matter for Ormiston to undertake, though fears for his own safety, should Argyll triumph, forced him to adopt the suggestion. Rob Roy had taken up his abode in his old house of Craigrostan, but an urgent message requesting him to meet Ormiston at Cramond was conveyed to him by one of the Grahams. Unable to divine the business which so elevated a legal functionary could have with an outlaw like himself, and thinking that probably the Hanoverians might have some peace-proposals to make, Rob decided to see the Lord-Justice General, though he should risk his neck in doing so. Taking only a few of his followers with him, so as to avoid notice, he passed swiftly through Stirlingshire, shaping his course towards Falkirk, and soon reached the little village of Cramond, a few miles from the capital. A word to Ormiston at Edinburgh announcing his arrival soon brought that gentleman thence to meet him at the little hamlet by the banks of Almond Water.

There was neither finessing nor delicacy with Ormiston in his dealings with Rob Roy, and he speedily made the outlaw aware of the object of this interview. A very short course of "leading-questions," as the lawyers call them, soon convinced Ormiston that Rob Roy had really nothing to relate which could criminate Argyll, and he proceeded, therefore, to hint in a vague fashion at the honours and emoluments which would be showered upon any one who would procure the Duke's degradation. But Rob was too wary to be caught in this manner, and refused to rise to the bait thus offered to him. His experience of the blandishments of Montrose and the vulgar bribes of Killearn had taught him to be wary of

Whiggish fraud, and the subtle suggestions of Ormiston fell harmlessly upon him. His position at this time was a difficult one. He was an outlaw, for whose head a price was offered, and he was upon alien territory, far from his "native heath," and separated from the clansmen who would have bled and died for him. The city of Edinburgh was within call of his enemies, and the rulers there would have been gratified by the execution of so notable a rebel as he. These facts were all plain to him when Ormiston laid his traitorous and dishonourable proposals before his notice, and he was compelled by his position to simulate sympathy with the Hanoverians which he did not feel, that he might regain his liberty.

Finding that persuasion would not induce this rude Highlander to betray one who had befriended him, the Lord-Justice General descended to threatening. The laws against the rebels, and especially the Clan Gregor, were severe, and nothing could hinder Ormiston from ordering the apprehension and speedy execution of Rob Roy at the Mercat-cross of Edinburgh as a pestilent and notable rebel. But Rob proved too perfect a politician even for the astute leader of the Scottish Bench. Avoiding the danger of committing himself to further the ruin of Argyll, he led Ormiston to believe that he could only procure proofs of the Duke's duplicity by returning to his own country. The snare which Ormiston had laid thus entrapped himself, and he suffered Rob Roy to escape from his grasp when he thought him most securely enclosed within it. The plotters parted thus, one returning to Edinburgh, convinced that he had secured the deposition of Argyll, and the other seeking again the seclusion of his Highland fortress, more determined than ever to protect his umquhile patron from the wiles of his hidden enemies.

The machinations of Montrose in the south, however, had rendered any action in Scotland quite unnecessary. If George I. had little sympathy with England, he had still less with Scotland, and the influence of Marlborough, backed by the

misrepresentations of Montrose, induced the King to deprive Argyll of his command in the north, although he had been found "among the faithless, faithful only he." Had the Duke returned to Scotland and revived the smouldering embers of revolt he might have brought disaster and ruin upon the Hanoverian cause, but with a far-seeing patriotism too rare amongst his contemporaries, he preferred to endure the disgrace of dismissal from the Court without attempting any reprisal. He retired to Inverary, and occupied his attention in planning, with his brother and successor, that Castle of Inverary which still remains as the chief seat of his descendants.

Though Rob Roy had eluded the grasp of his enemies at Cramond Bridge he knew that danger lay all around him, and was certain that this new refusal to bear false witness against Argyll would rouse the emissaries of Montrose to active opposition. He followed, therefore, the wisest plan which one in his circumstances could have adopted. Proffers of pardon had been made to the Highlanders who would submit to the Hanoverian leaders; and Marlborough, with much discretion, had directed that those rebels should be dealt with tenderly whom he could not reach with ease. Rob Roy determined to avail himself of this indulgence. With a following of about fifty clansmen he journeyed to Inverary with the intention of warning the Duke of Argyll against those who were plotting his overthrow. He failed to meet that nobleman, however, and he purchased a partial immunity from oppression by resigning the arms of himself and his band to Colonel Campbell of Finab; and, taking the oath of allegiance to King George—with mental reservations, we suppose—he professed himself to be a Hanoverian of the Argyll stamp. It is not our place to defend or blame this action; we merely relate it that our readers may judge the character of Rob Roy fairly. We shall shortly see how this incident was misrepresented, and turned into the occasion for a serious charge alike against his fidelity and religion.

Rob had regained the favour of Argyll by recounting to him the futile efforts which Montrose had made to corrupt him ; and the protection which Campbell of Finab gave to him and his followers received the sanction of the Duke. Purged in this fashion from the suspicion of disaffection, Rob Roy remained undisturbed at Craigrostan for some time after. To support his garrison he was compelled to resort to his former habits of stouthrief and spulzie, and the larders of Montrose once more supplied him and his men with the necessities of life. But the Jacobite cause was now almost hopeless, and the rigour with which the prisoners taken had been treated by the Government terrified the people of Scotland. All that Macgregor could do, therefore, was merely to bide his time, and watch carefully the course of events. The activity of Montrose soon forced him into action.

The cherished design of the Duke to break the power of the Macgregors in his own district had been delayed, but not abandoned. Now that Rob Roy had taken the oath of allegiance, Montrose imagined that he might safely prosecute it, and he arranged that a party of soldiers should proceed to Glengyle, the residence of Rob's nephew, *Glune Dhu*, with instructions to burn and destroy the house, and carry off the valuables which they could obtain. Cadogan's Swiss mercenaries had failed to carry out this favourite project before, but Montrose thought to make sure of this expedition by issuing special injunctions to the Hanoverian soldiers from Finlarig to execute his purpose without mercy. Intelligence reached Rob Roy of this proposed raid, and he speedily took measures to prevent it. Summoning as many of his clan as were within hail, he mustered nearly three hundred men, and took up his position near the house of Glengyle. The Hanoverians had been too rapid for him, however, and he was only in time to see the mansion reduced to smoking ruins, and to witness the last portion of his nephew's cattle disappearing by the north road to Finlarig. To descend upon these and bear them away was an easy task ; but he did not feel himself

strong enough to follow the troops to the garrison in the Castle, and retired immediately to Craigrostan.

The success which had attended the attack of the troops upon Glengyle emboldened Montrose to proceed still further with his plan for destroying the Clan Gregor, and circumstances seemed to favour him. A small party of Hanoverian soldiers had captured one of the Macgregors lurking suspiciously in the neighbourhood of their garrison, and bearing arms, despite the rigorous orders which had been repeated forbidding them to carry arms save a blunt and pointless knife. The offence was not a military one, and it was necessary that the prisoner should be carried to Perth to be tried before the civil court. A detachment of dragoons was told off for this duty, and the soldiers took the road to Perth with their captive, passing through Glen Ogle and skirting the southern shores of Lochearn. Ere they reached St Fillans they were intercepted by a band of Macgregors, with their dreaded chief at their head, and forced, after a short conflict, to set their prisoner free, and deliver up their arms to their assailants. So flagrant an outrage against the King's troops by one who had sworn allegiance to him could not be suffered to remain without severe punishment. No sooner had Montrose heard of it than he concluded that his enemy was at last delivered into his hands, and he posted home to Scotland with all speed, that he might superintend Rob Roy's destruction in person.

The forces in Scotland were now under the command of Lieutenant-General Carpenter, a soldier who was sufficient of a politician to know that since Argyll's disgrace his interests would be best served by cultivating the friendship of Montrose. When that Duke applied to him for his assistance against Rob Roy he responded with alacrity, and a plan was soon devised between them which might finally break down the power of Macgregor in the Lomond district. It was arranged that three separate bands of Hanoverian soldiers should leave the garrisons at Glasgow, Stirling, and Finlarig

and unite at Buchanan House, timing their journey so as to surprise the Macgregors at Craigrostan before daybreak. The night proved a tempestuous one, and the heavy rains which fell had so cut up the rude Highland pathways that the sun had risen long ere they reached the shores of Loch Lomond. The news of their advance had preceded them, and Rob Roy, wishing if possible to avoid an encounter, had taken to the hills with his men, and watched the actions of the soldiers from secure hiding-places. Baulked thus of their anticipated prey, and finding no enemy to encounter, the soldiers were preparing to retire again towards Buchanan, when Rob gave the signal to his men, and a volley was discharged from the muskets of his followers upon the helpless men who had thought to entrap the clansmen. As they numbered about two hundred and fifty soldiers Rob Roy dared not venture to attack them with the slender force at his disposal; and as they could not break up their columns with safety to look for an ambushed enemy, they were forced to be content with such revenge as an act of wanton spoliation afforded. The leader of the troops gave orders that they should advance upon the house of Craigrostan, seize all the valuables which it contained, and give the structure remorselessly to the flames, as "a nest and harbourie of pestilent rebels." His commands were faithfully obeyed, and for the third time Rob Roy was cast forth upon the world, ruined and homeless, and compelled to witness from his ambuscade his hearth made desolate, and his gear scattered abroad, or given as a prey to the devouring element. Well did he know at whose instigation this outrage had been perpetrated, for he recognised his old enemy Græme of Killearn and his kinsman the Laird of Gorthie in the midst of the band, inciting them to proceed with their work of destruction; and he vowed to be revenged upon these two men, and the Duke their master, for the share they had again taken in his ruin. How that vow was kept it shall now be our task to relate.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE KIDNAPPING OF KILLEARN.

“ A’ the country, far and near,
Hae heard Macgregor’s fame, lady.

“ He was a hedge about his friends,
A heckle to his foes, lady ;
If any man did him gainsay,
He felt his deadly blows, lady.”—*Rob Roy*.

The pillaging and burning of Craigrostan in the manner we have described reduced Rob Roy to very severe straits indeed. He had again succeeded in saving his wife and children from the fury of his oppressors, by despatching them hastily and secretly to Argyll’s territories on the shores of Loch Awe; but he was now left without a roof to cover him, and deprived by one stroke alike of the means of sheltering and supporting his numerous and lawless followers. The difficulty of restraining them will be understood when it is remembered that many of them had been drawn from amongst the “broken men” in the north, and had been long accustomed to depend for their subsistence upon their predatory skill. Under the command of Rob Roy they had been to some extent reduced to order, and taught to utilise their power for political purposes; but now he was left without the means of keeping them together, and was forced to disband them and suffer them to win their living in their former fashion, regardless of either King or law. To set loose a band of reckless marauders in the fertile district of Stirlingshire could only prove a hardship to all in their neighbourhood; and yet there was no other course open to Rob Roy, since his enemies had destroyed his last stronghold. And we believe that many of the outrages attributed to him at this period of his career, and which have served to bring

obloquy upon his name, were committed by these rude northern Highlanders who had escaped beyond his control.

The Celtic mind is too fiery to submit to insult, oppression, and contumely without planning some method of retaliation, and Rob Roy retained near his person a few of his most faithful followers to aid him in his meditated revenge. The *Sidier Roy*—the King's soldiers—had found out his retreat, and he knew that the thousand pounds of blood-money offered for his head would be more than sufficient to tempt some of them to destroy him. He was thus compelled to lurk in caves and secret places near his former home, and to wait and watch for the opportunity for reprisal which he knew must ultimately present itself. His favourite retreat at this time was that natural crevice in the cliffs which fringe Loch Lomond that is still pointed out as Rob Roy's Cave, for, though it is but a short distance from Inversnaid, the bold outlaw wisely judged that his pursuers would least expect to find him so close to his own property. Such of his followers as could not be accommodated there were sent by him to the old quarters of his clan at Loch Katrine, and commanded to hold themselves in readiness to join him upon short notice. Meanwhile he lurked in "loathsome and derne plaices of the yearth," silently biding his time.

To him who hath patience all things are possible. Ere a month had flown the wished-for circumstance occurred which placed revenge within his power. What is called in Scotland "the November term" came round, and Græme of Killearn set forth from Buchanan House to collect the rents of the tenants of his master the Duke of Montrose. It had been customary for them to meet at the house of their landlord; but his high position at Court had increased his pride, and he could not bear that the industrious farmers who worked so faithfully for him should come "betwixt the wind and his nobility." Græme was ordered, therefore, to make his collection of the rents necessary to support his employer at Chapellarroch, a spot

midway between Buchanan House and Drymen, and to keep his bucolic clients away from the serene dignity of one who had received the notice and favour of King George. The arrangement proved a fatal one, as we shall see.

The Inn of Chapellarroch, like most country hostelries, had one large room, which served as a meeting-place for the farmers of the locality, wherein they might discuss, without fear, the prospects of the harvest and the Pretender; and it was in this quarter that Græme decided to transact his business upon the occasion to which we refer. The tenants were summoned to meet him here to make payments of the rents due to Montrose, and, in accordance with the ancient Scottish custom, he had ordered entertainment to be provided for them. Though the country all around was in a disturbed state he did not anticipate any interruption, thinking that the presence of the Duke at Buchanan House would prevent the Macgregors from annoying him. Besides, he had been assured that Rob Roy had fled to Ireland for safety, and thus his most formidable foe was far away. It was with some measure of satisfaction, therefore, that Græme met the tenants of his lord and received from them the rents they owed. The scene may easily be conceived.

“ The parties are met ;
The tables are set ;
There is ‘ punch,’ ‘ cold *without*,’ ‘ hot *with*,’ heavy wet,
Ale-glasses and jugs,
And rummers and mugs,
And sand on the floor without carpet or rugs.”

The business had been satisfactorily concluded, and the factor and his guests were in the midst of their hilarity when they were suddenly startled by hearing the sound of pipes playing in the distance. Gradually the player approached nearer to the inn, and they could soon distinguish the notes of one of the well-known pibrochs which the Macgregors played when mustering to raid or foray, and with which many of the

tenants were already too familiar. With dismay they heard that the mysterious piper ceased his warlike music as he reached the entrance of the hostelry, and after a brief pause the door opened, and a Highlander, fully armed, entered and saluted the company. The tartan which he wore betrayed his clan, the plume in his bonnet marked him as a chief, and even without these there was no mistaking that stalwart form, that ruddy complexion, and those sandy locks which had procured his bye-name for him. The trembling farmers knew that they were in the presence of the bold outlaw, Rob Roy Macgregor, who had so frequently carried terror into their homesteads.

Killearn managed to subdue his consternation at the unexpected appearance of his enemy, and, affecting a cordiality which he was far from feeling, invited him to partake of such cheer as the table afforded. The offer was accepted, and Rob Roy sat down, an unwelcome guest, beside the terrified Lowlanders. Fearing some lawless attack upon his treasure, the factor, at the first sound of the pipes, had hastily thrown the bags containing the money he had received into an empty loft in the inn, and was determined not to yield up his rents if he could avoid it. When Rob intimated that he wished to see him alone he was prepared with prevarication. The tenants retired at Macgregor's command, glad to escape so easily from his grasp, and as they filed out of the inn they found that the house was surrounded and the door guarded by Rob Roy's fierce clansmen with drawn claymores.

They had no sooner departed than the chief turned to Killearn, and demanded "how he had come on with his collection?"

The lie was ready on Killearn's tongue.

"I have made no collection," he said. "I had not begun to collect when you came here, and now you have sent the tenants away."

"No, no," said Rob Roy, smiling grimly, "that lie will not serve you. The Graemes never feast their debtors till they

touch their gold. If you will not tell me truthfully what money you have taken, I must see your books and find out for myself."

To the protestations of Killearn the chief deigned no reply, but at a signal from him six of his followers entered the room, and soon discovered the place where the papers of the factor were laid. With them in his possession it was not difficult for Rob Roy to sum up the total that had been paid to Killearn, and he insisted that it should be at once handed over to him to repay the losses which he had suffered repeatedly at the hands of Montrose. In vain did Græme remonstrate. He could no longer deny that he had received the money, but he refused to disclose its place of concealment. The premises, however, were not extensive, and there had been no time to find a secure place for his hoard. The Macgregors—adepts at this occupation—speedily lighted upon the money-bags, and laid them triumphantly before their chief, and Killearn, unable further to support his falsehood, had to witness their victory in silence.

With the capture of his hidden treasure he thought that their concern with him would be over, but he was grievously mistaken. The money which Rob Roy had thus obtained he looked upon as merely a part-payment towards the settlement of his own account against Montrose for the spoiling of Balquidder, the burning of Auchinchisallan, and the destruction of Craigrostan. With Killearn himself he had a deeper debt to adjust. He had to avenge such wrongs and injuries as are seldom forgiven, and he had the desolater of his home within his power. He determined to utilise his captive so as to extort some reparation of his losses from the Duke, and to hold him as a hostage till his claims were settled.

By Rob Roy's directions Killearn sat down at the table and penned an epistle to the Duke of Montrose at his dictation. The document is still preserved amongst the manuscripts at Buchanan House, and we are enabled to give a copy of it.

“Chappellarroch, Nov. 19th, 1716.

“MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE.—I am obliged to give your Grace the trouble of this, by Robert Roy’s commands, being so unfortunate at present as to be his prisoner. I refer the way and manner I was apprehended to the bearer, and shall only, in short, acquaint your Grace with the demands, which are, that your Grace shall discharge him of all soumes he owes your Grace, and give him the soume of 3400 merks for his loss and damages sustained by him, both at Craigrosstown and at his house, Auchinchisallen; and that your Grace shall give your word not to trouble or prosecute him afterwards; till which time he carries me, all the money I received this day, my books and bonds for entrees not yet paid, along with him, with assurances of hard usage if any party are sent after him. The soume I received this day, conform to the nearest computation I can make before several of the gentlemen, is 3227£ 2sh 8d Scots, of which I gave them notes. I shall wait your Grace’s return, and ever am

“Your Grace’s most obedient, faithful, humble servant,

“JOHN GRÆME.”

This note was despatched by one of the servants of the inn to Buchanan House, but Rob Roy knew better than to remain in the locality of Chapellarroch. By his orders the factor prepared to leave the inn in his company, and the books, papers, and treasure which he had with him were carried by the Highland caterans who formed his escort. They sped rapidly northwards by devious and secret ways to the shores of Loch Katrine, to join the band of Macgregors whom Rob Roy had placed there. And the trembling factor, knowing that any attempt at resistance upon his part would probably terminate his career, was forced to submit to this unexpected journey without audible complaints.

Montrose received the letter intimating the kidnapping of his relative with amazed indignation. He had travelled from the south post-haste for the purpose of destroying this lawless robber, and here, under his very eye, such an outrage had been committed as he had not hitherto endured. The audacity

of Rob Roy seemed to be without parallel, and even the Duke felt that he was not safe to remain within his own mansion whilst he was in the neighbourhood, so he fled to Glasgow. His services to his country at least entitled him to the protection of the Government, and he applied at once for advice and assistance. The twenty-first of November, 1716, was a busy day with James, Duke of Montrose. He sat down and wrote three long letters to Lord Townshend, then Secretary of State, explaining the circumstances in which he was placed, and craving his aid. Two of these are still preserved amongst his papers, and seem to have been rough drafts of the letter which he finally sent, and which has been printed in full by Sir Walter Scott in his introduction to "Rob Roy." This letter differs in several important points from either of the drafts, and, as one of them contains much information regarding our hero which is not to be found elsewhere, we take the liberty of quoting it entirely. We would direct the attention of our readers to the fact that it contains several confirmations of our narrative of Rob Roy's exploits, and verifies our history of them. The letter has not hitherto been included in any sketch of his life :—

" The Duke of Montrose to Lord Townshend.
21 November 1716.

" Sir,—I could not think of giveing you the trouble of writeing from this place so long as I could furnish yow with nothing that could be entertainement for yourself or be of use for His Majesty's service. Tho' I had all the inclination in the world to cultivate the friendship and regard I have so justly for yow.

" Ane unexpected accident has now, I think, made it necessary for me to give yow the trouble of this long letter, believing that tho' I am the person who is immediately affected by it, yet it so far concerns the honour of His Majesty's Government that I should be to blame if I did not acquaint those who have the honour to be near His Majesty of it.

"Mr Graham of Killearn, who has the charge of my estate in the Highlands (the same person to whom the late Earll of Mar wrote a letter, in winter last, to debauch my tennents to the service of the Pretender, which I had the honour to read to His Majesty), haveing gone into that countrey on Munday last, as he uses allways to do at this season of the year, to gather in my rents, as he was in a countrey house with some of my tennents about 9 o'clock the same night, was attackt by Rob Roy, that notorious robber, with a party of ruffians whom he has still kept about him ever since the late Rebellion, and was carryed away prisoner by these barbarians to the hills, with what money he had gott, his books, papers, and bonds to a considerable value, and is now in their hands to suffer all the injurys that a desperate wicked crew of bandits shall be pleas'd to put upon him, without my being able to forsee any manner of way how its possible to rescue him.

"That you may the better comprehend this matter, I must inform you that this Rob Roy has of a long time putt himself att the head of the clan M'Gregor, a race of people ever obnoxious to all governments for their robbery, depredations, and murders. From the revolution to this moment, this fellow has taken every opportunity to appear against the Government, but allways with ane eye to rob the countrey, never having done ane single action of good service to the party he pretended to favour; and has actually committed more villanys and ravages in the countrey than all the other Highlanders have done. Some three or four years ago, haveing contracted a great many debts, he left his usuall residence and went some 12 or 16 miles further into the Highlands, and putt himself under the protection of the Earll of Breadalbin. When my Lord Cadoggan was in the Highlands, he ordered his house at that place to be brunt, which obliged him to return to the same place from whence he first came, being hard by my estate at Buchanan, in a rugged inaccessible countrey of about five or six miles in lenth, upon the side of Lochlomond, full of rocks and precipices. Being intended to make this place his residence, where all his friends and followers were, he judged very rightly that it was possible for all this that he might be surprised, especially by the Highland independent companys if they should be hearty in it. For this reason, no sooner was my Lord Cadoggan at Edinburgh in his way to London, but he and Collonell Campbell of Finnab,

commander of one of the said Highland independent companys, so contrived it as that this notorious rogue, with about 45 of his followers, went to Inverary, made a sham surrender of their arms to the Collonell as one of His Majesty's officers, and notwithstanding that he was actually attainted by the Parliament a good while before, he was receaved by him as a commoner, and he and all his men had particular protections given them sign'd by the Collonell.

"After two or three days very kind intertainement given him at Inverary by the Collonell and some others their, he return'd to Craigrostan (that's the name of the countrey I mentioned before he was now to reside in), when it was not long before he had occasion to give proofs for the sincerity of his submission, for in a very short time after, he appeared hostile at the head of about 200 men well armed in opposition to the King's troops who hapned to be in the countrey theirabouts in executing orders. At one of these times he actually attackt a party, rescued a prisoner from them, and made the party submitt to him, for which the officer has been since broke as being defective in his duty, for not making a good defence. All this time his partys were going down into the low countrey, pillageing and plundering the countrey people, takeing from them their money, or what else they thought convenient for them; my tennents being their next neighbours had their share of this.

"When I came to Scotland and was informed of these disorders, I applied to Generall Carpenter for troops, and he went very cheerfully into it. Three partys of 80 men each were ordered to march in the night from Glasgow, Stirling and Finlayrig (a house of the Earl of Breadalbine's, where a garrison now is), in order to surprise him and all his followers in their houses before break of day. It hapned most unlukily that the night appoynted for the execution was so prodigiously rainy that it was impossible for the party to come in time to the stations appoynted them. So the villains, by the favour of the daylight, had the opportunity to perceive the party's marching, and so escaped very narrowly. When they saw themselves out of danger they had the impudence to fire upon the King's troops from the rocks and precipices—killed one granadeer, and hurt some others. This resistance gave the commander of the party, Major Green, of Sir Charles Hotham's regiment, sufficient provocation to burn Rob Roy's

house, which accordingly was done. Mr Graham, now their prisoner, being my deputy-sheriff of the countey, went along with the party that marched from Stirling, and was present with the Major when all these things were transacted, as was likewise another Mr Graham, who has the charge of my affairs in the low country, whom I had directed to attend the Major with the party he had carryed from Glasgow. Rob Roy was pleased to say that now he wanted only this other gentleman to be fully revenged of the injury they had done him, and that he would make it his bussiness to find him out likewise, at least he would burn his house, which he may do, indeed, if he has a mind to it.

“ I can’t help saying that from severall observations I have made, this rogue Rob Roy, however obnoxious he is both to the King and the countrey, has his friends, but I hope the good times will come when all these dark mysterys shall come to light. In the meantime I hope I shall be able to offer a plan to His Majesty, when I shall have the honour to see him, how to bring the Highlands of Scotland immediately to be in the hands of His Majesty, that these people may be no longer a tooll in the hands of any subjects to disturb His Majesty’s Government.”

Besides the letter which he sent to Townshend, the Duke wrote to General Carpenter asking him to interfere, and also despatched a note to Mr Pringle, Under-Secretary of State lest his first letter to Townshend should miscarry. Thus the whole Government was roused to take action against this “notorious villain,” who had dared to resist the merciless vengeance of the Hanoverians. Meanwhile Rob kept his prisoner strongly guarded at Loch Katrine, and waited for his friends to ransom him.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE RELEASE OF GRÆME.

“ Ye trusted in your Highland men,
They trusted you, dear Charlie ;
They kent your hiding in the glen,
But there was nane that wad betray.”

—*Jacobite Song.*

The district to which Rob Roy carried his prisoner, Græme of Killearn, though now familiar to every Scottish tourist, was at that time an almost unknown country. For centuries Loch Katrine had been the favourite refuge of those marauding bands of clansmen who preyed upon the Lowlanders near the Highland line ; and it had been the chosen retreat of the Macgregors when they found themselves—as they often did—at variance with the Government. It was with a sinking heart, therefore, that Græme looked upon that scenery which has charmed so many visitors, and felt that every mile which bore him away from “the busy haunts of men” made his return less possible. And if his awakened conscience reminded him of the terrible injustice that he had done to his captor, he might well fear for the result of this expedition.

The clansmen of Rob Roy had waited faithfully for him at the appointed rendezvous on the island now known as “Ellen’s Isle,” and when he arrived there, with Græme in his custody, he was received with jubilation. Though detaining his captive under strict surveillance, the chief was careful that no insult should be offered nor indignity put upon him ; and when we remember the wrongs which he had suffered at Græme’s hands his forbearance is wonderful. It would be no easy matter for one like him to refrain from avenging himself upon the man who had embittered his life, and rendered him a homeless outcast.

The authorities, meanwhile, were casting about to devise the best means of capturing the daring outlaw and bringing him to condign punishment. The Duke of Montrose had applied to many of his friends for advice in the matter, and all agreed with him that strenuous efforts must be made either to take Rob Roy, or to procure his exile from Scotland. The Duke's intimate acquaintance, George Baillie of Jervisewood, then a Lord of the Admiralty, and M.P. for Berwickshire, gave his opinion very decidedly that "the Government rather than the Duke of Montrose should act against Rob Roy, and that orders should be given thereanent to the Independent Companies." The draft of Montrose's letter to Lord Townshend, which we have quoted, seems to indicate that he had little faith in the action of these independent companies, since Campbell of Finab—one of the most energetic leaders of them—had conspired to suffer Rob Roy to escape. He would likely incline more towards the policy of bribery which General Carpenter advocated in a letter which we shall quote, since it is little known even by those who have studied the life of Rob Roy. The left-handed compliment to the chief which it contains is of much value, coming, as it does, from one of his opponents.

General Carpenter to the Duke of Montrose.

"Montrose, November 26, 1716.

"My Lord,—I rec'd here the honour of your Grace's letter of the 21, and am truly concern'd for the misfortune Mr Graham is fallen into, and also for your Grace's loss; butt believe Mr Graham's condition gives you much more trouble. I hope to wait of your Grace att your house before I returne to Edinburgh; and if I can contribute in any manner to serve you in this affair will do itt with pleasure. I think some method should be contrived, if possible, to take or clear the country of such a notorious robber and his gang. 'Twill be difficult to gett him any way but by bribing one of his followers to betray him to a Party, otherwise he will always be too cunning and nimble for soldiers under armes. While I

have the honour to command his Majesty's Troops in this Country, they shall be putt in every proper place for his service, and the security of the Country from rebells and robbers, in which I will have great regard to your Grace's opinion and recommendation, of which when I have the honour to see you.

"I am, my Lord,

"Your Grace's most humble and obedient servant,

"GEO. CARPENTER."

No words could more plainly indicate the absolute helplessness of disciplined troops when opposed to the Highlanders in their own country than those in the letter of the General. Though he had complete control of all the forces in Scotland, he could think of no more effectual method of capturing the chief than the vain one of bribing his clansmen to betray him!

The fame of Rob Roy's exploit, in the meantime, had spread throughout the land, and had reached the ears even of royalty. The letters which Montrose had despatched to London had accomplished that whereto they were sent; and he must have appeared to George I. as a deeply-injured man, who had suffered loss and outrage at the hands of a rebel because of his devotion to the House of Hanover. The sentiments with which the King regarded this daring outlaw may be discovered from the letter which Townshend sent in reply to that of Montrose. Lest our readers should doubt the fact of George I. having ever expressed any opinion about Rob Roy, we shall quote this epistle as it stands, believing that it has not been known to any previous historian of his career:—

Lord Townshend to the Duke of Montrose.

"Whitehall, Dec. 1, 1716.

"My Lord,--Tho' I have been hitherto hindred from acknowledging the honour of your Grace's letter of the 21 past, which came to my hands by a flying pacquett, yet I did not fail to lay it before H.R.H., who hes the utmost resentment of that insolent attempt of Rob Roy's of which your Grace gives account, and I have H.R.H.'s Directions to assure your

Grace that he will very heartily goe into anie Measure that shall be judged effectual to suppress that Robber and those who follow him, and to restore the Peace and quiet of those parts which have been infested and disturb'd by him, and I have by order of H.R.H. writt to Lieutenant-General Carpenter that he should lose no time in concerting with your Grace, and putting in Execution what may be most proper for this end, which I hope will have its desired effect to the satisfaction of H.R.H., and of all his Majestie's Servants.

"I am, with the greatest respect, My Lord,

"Your Grace's most obedient humble servant,

"TOWNSHEND."

The unfortunate Commander of the Forces was now thoroughly at his wits' end as to how he should deal with this desperate freebooter. He might have temporised and trifled a little with Montrose, but the commands of the King, as conveyed by Townshend to him, could not safely be neglected, and he was forced to take some action. His heart still clung to the unsoldier-like scheme of bribery which he had first proposed, and he had really no other feasible plan to suggest. The perturbation of spirit by which he was exercised may be discovered by the letter which he wrote to Montrose from Perth on the 9th December 1716.

In it he relates that "he had his thoughts often on ways and means to catch the Arch-Rogue Rob Roy. His opinion is that no method can be so effectual as ordering the three independent Companies to such places and on such parties as His Grace shall think proper for that purpose, and if parties from the Regiments can be assisting to intercept him and his gang, they shall be posted wherever His Grace shall judge convenient; but for scouring the Highlands he thinks none so nimble and hopeful of succeeding as those independent companies who know the countries, and are used to such expeditions. If His Grace approves of this, he requests that His Grace will be pleased to send him a Scheme, and he promises to do his part, and if in the meantime His Grace would have

any companies or parties of the Regiments quartered in any Towns or Villages he wishes to have His Grace's Commands, and if near the hills it should be either a place tenable, or a number sufficient to secure themselves from any insult or surprise, with a provision made for fuel, candle, and other necessaries in that cold season."

To those who have seen what manner of man our hero was, it will be evident that this pottering method of attacking him would be least likely to succeed, and even the General seems to have had his doubts about it, for he returns to his former advice of bribery in a postscript, writing thus:—

"The most likely method to take Rob Roy, and I think sure, would be to issue a proclamation with a Pardon and Reward for any one or more who should deliver him up, with a little care to have severall of those proclamations sent to the places he frequents."

This favourite project of Carpenter's could find little acceptance with Montrose, and would only serve to show him how impotent the troops were against his enemy. The Duke knew too well that the price which had been put upon the head of Rob Roy years before had been quite inadequate to tempt even the lawless Macgregors to betray the chief of their clan to certain death. The difficulty about Græme of Killearn, however, was shortly to be adjusted, and in a most unexpected fashion. He had been detained at Loch Katrine for several days so as to admit of a reply to his letter, but as none came, and there was no appearance of any ransom being forwarded to redeem him, Rob Roy began to fear that his kidnapping was to be unproductive after all. He suspected that the protracted silence of Montrose boded no good to him; and he determined to shift his quarters frequently so as to evade pursuit, taking his prisoner with him. Græme was thus unwillingly dragged through the country from place to place, and kept in continual fear lest he should be put to death

so as to relieve his captors of any danger through his detention. He was carried in this unpleasant fashion throughout the district which lies between Loch Katrine and the Lake of Menteith during six weary days, and the agony of apprehension which he must have endured can hardly be estimated. As there was neither appearance of rescue nor ransom Rob Roy decided that he would be safer to set him at liberty than to risk his detention longer, so he carried him rapidly through Stirlingshire to Kirkintilloch, and left him there with his books and papers to make his way to his patron's house at Glasgow as he best could. The welcome which he received from his ducal relative may be learned from the letter which Montrose sent to Townshend announcing the fact. Sir Walter Scott has published the note that the Duke forwarded to Mr R. Pringle, the Under Secretary, but we are now in a position to print the letter which he despatched to the Principal Secretary, and which would cross the one from the latter gentleman that we have already printed in this chapter.

The Duke of Montrose to Lord Townshend.

“ [28] November 1716.

“ My Lord,—By my letter of the 21st, I gave your lordship a full account of ane insolence committed by that notorious rogue, Rob Roy, in apprehending Mr Graham of Killearn, and carrying him prisoner to the hills, with his money, books, papers, and bonds.

“ I have now the pleasure to acquaint your lordship that this fellow, after haveing some time to reflect upon the matter, saw, at last, that it could, in no ways, turn to his account to retain the gentleman any longer, or to committ any barbarity or cruelty towards him ; and theirfor dismist him upon Sunday evening last, restoring to him his books, paper, and bonds, which could be of no use to him, satisfying himself with the money he had gott.

“ Your lordship will believe that it was a very agreeable surprise to me, last night, when Mr Graham himself came to this place, and gave me the first account I had of him from the time he was carryed away. He tells me that he was con-

tinually carried from place to place, from the Munday's night that he was made prisoner to the Sunday's evening following that he was dismissed.

"Tho' this affair has ended much better then I could have expected, yet your lordship will easily judge that their's are absolute necessity to have some of the King's troops lodged in convenient places near the mountains for the security of the country below, which must otherwise lye exposed to all the insults that may be reasonably expected from the neighbourhood of that lawless race of people. For this purpose I'm resolved to send a gentleman to Edinburgh to discourse with Brigadier Preston, who now commands in the absence of Lieutenant-General Carpenter, and to consider of the most proper methods to be taken for that service."

The "gentleman" to whom the Duke refers was no other than Græme of Gorthie, who, as our readers may remember, had been associated with Killlearn in his last attack upon Craigrostan. The threats of vengeance which Rob Roy had uttered against him had terrified him beyond measure, and he had fled in company with the Duke to Glasgow, fearing to hear every day that his house had been plundered and destroyed by the Macgregors. He had thus special reasons to induce him to activity in the suppression of the clan, and would doubtless advocate their extinction with sufficient energy. But his mission to Edinburgh was productive of little fruit. When Carpenter returned and learned from Preston that an urgent message had been received from the Duke of Montrose, he felt that it was necessary to do something, if it were only to keep that nobleman quiet. He sent, therefore, for Campbell of Finab and talked the matter over with him, persuading him that it would be for the interest both of himself and his chief, the Duke of Argyll, to remove the Macgregors from their old haunts. He announced the result of this interview to Montrose in the postscript of a letter dated 15th December 1716, in which he writes that "he had discoursed fully with Finab about Rob Roy, and believes he will exert either to take him or

drive him out of the country." A few days after the date of this letter he wrote again to Montrose, describing his meeting with Finab more fully, in the following terms :—

"I acquainted your Grace that I had very earnestly recommended to Finab the taken of Rob Roy, and that he engag'd to do itt if possible, or att least to drive him out of the Country, and I was this day [Dec. 25th] told, tho' not from sure hands, that Rob Roy was gone away. Finab went hence, seeming very earnest to take him ; so I am of opinion he is, or will soon be, catch't or oblig'd to go of. I promis'd to pay £50 if he could be taken."

The opinion which Carpenter so confidently expressed was not shared by those who knew more about the outlaw than he did. Montrose himself had fled from his own mansion when he knew the Macgregors were in the neighbourhood ; and Killearn and Gorthie had both taken refuge in Glasgow to be out of their reach. Cokburn of Ormiston, Lord-Justice General, who had attempted unsuccessfully to corrupt the fidelity of Roy Roy at Cramond, by proposing the false accusation of Argyll, trembled for his safety since he had heard of the treatment of Killearn, and wrote to Montrose (15th Dec. 1716) that he was "frightened to come by the Stirling Road on account of Rob Roy's kidnapping way." And during this time the object of all these plots and fears was living, as became a Highland chief, in the midst of his clansmen, wanting neither "maut nor meal" whilst the girnels and larders of Montrose contained them, and repaying himself with interest out of the Duke's stores for the spoliation he had suffered by his orders. His audacity became so great, and his exactions so intolerable, that Montrose could no longer endure them, and was forced to take stringent measures against him, which shall be described in our next chapter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE FORDS OF FREW.

“ ‘Come thro’, come thro’, Lieutenant Gordon,
Come thro’ and drink some wine wi’ me !
Yestreen I was your prisoner,
But now this morning I am free !’ ”

—*Ballad of “ Archie of Ca’field.”*

The Duke of Montrose soon discovered that he was to obtain little practical assistance from General Carpenter, probably because that individual did not care to risk his reputation by pursuing a Highland robber amongst his native hills, where the success of the troops was at least doubtful. Even the orders from His Majesty only led him to temporise with the Duke, and to shift the responsibility of the capture of Roy Roy upon Campbell of Finab and the other Commanders of Independent Companies. Montrose saw, therefore, that if he wished to capture and punish the daring freebooter who had so frequently defied him, he must take immediate steps upon his own account for his apprehension. He resolved to make a bold effort to entrap his enemy, and thus prove that he was still master in his own territory, and required no aid from Carpenter.

The method which he adopted to effect his purpose was fraught with danger. He engaged his trusty chamberlain, Mungo Græme, the Laird of Gorthie, with whom we are already acquainted, to proceed to Dunbarton Castle, and to procure from the Earl of Glencairn, then Governor of that fort, a supply of muskets and ammunition that he might arm his tenantry. The Earl did not venture to refuse his request, and Gorthie reached Buchanan House safely with his artillery, and distributed the arms amongst the tenants of Montrose.

without delay. Those farmers and cottars upon whose fidelity he could depend were furnished with fire-arms, and directed to meet on a certain day at the mansion-house and form an expedition against the Macgregors.

Rob Roy at this time was lurking as a fugitive amongst the Braes of Balquidder. He still maintained a band of his wild followers at Portanellan, on Loch Katrine, which he had made his headquarters ; but he roamed through the country between Loch Earn and Loch Awe attended only by one or two faithful clansmen. From the numerous friends whom he had by Loch Lomond he obtained constant and early intelligence of the movements of Montrose, and it was not long ere he received word of the intended raid against him. The plan which he took to protect himself proved completely successful. With a small company of his followers, armed to the teeth, he descended upon the lands of Montrose, and, proceeding from steading to steading, he compelled the farmers to yield up the arms they had received lest worse should befall them. Resistance on their part was vain, for Rob Roy took them thus in detail, and they had no opportunity of uniting together so as to oppose him effectually. When he reached the neighbourhood of Drymen he considered that he had gone as far south as was consistent with his safety, and he returned rapidly northward to Portanellan laden with the spoils of his enemies. Not only had he laid Montrose under tribute for the supply of his table and larder, but he had even taken the weapons of the Hanoverian King which were about to be levelled against himself, and had stocked his armoury therewith.

The ridicule which this exploit brought upon the Duke of Montrose was more than he could tamely endure. He applied directly to the Privy Council, and obtained a Commission of Fire and Sword authorising him to organize a body of horse and foot-soldiers, and to proceed against "sorners, robbers, and broken men ; to raise the hue-and-cry after

them, to recover goods stolen by them, and to seize their persons." The name of Rob Roy was purposely omitted, so that the Duke might be able to attack any of the Campbells whom he found affording shelter to the outlaw or his men. Unwilling to allow General Carpenter to trifle longer with him, he assembled his own followers at Buchanan House in their full strength, and putting himself at their head he marched at once towards Loch Earn.

Though Rob Roy had heard of his purpose, he did not anticipate that his movements would be so rapidly accomplished ; and he was therefore in no hurry to take steps in his own defence. For once he was deceived in his estimate of Montrose. That nobleman, thoroughly incensed against him, had suffered no time to be lost in his pursuit, and had led his troops by the speediest routes towards Glen Ogle, where he believed Rob Roy was lurking. The tenants who followed him were eager in the chase, for each man had some wrong or outrage to avenge upon the Macgregors, and this raid was popular amongst them. They pushed on, therefore, enthusiastically, by paths with which they were familiar, and which would have been impassable by regular troops, and thus reached Portanellan in an incredibly short time. As was expected, they found this place wholly deserted save by some women and children, who refused to afford any information as to the hiding-place of their chief. Irritated by their contumacy, Montrose ordered that the house should be fired over their heads ; but the Laird of Gorthie persuaded him to refrain from this uncalled-for barbarity, as the flames might arouse the whole country, and bring the other clans upon them when they were in the very worst position to defend themselves. They moved forward still, skirting Ben A'an, and moving northwards by Loch Lubnaig and Strathyre. Whilst here they learned, by a rare piece of good fortune, that Rob Roy had been in the neighbourhood upon the preceding day, and was believed to be resting at that time in the Clachan of Bal-

quidder. No news could be more welcome, and Montrose, taking a selected band with him, set off at once in pursuit, ordering his troops to follow and support him.

Little suspecting the danger which threatened him, Rob Roy had lain down to rest in one of the cottages at Balquidder, near the spot where his own house had once stood, and the two solitary clansmen who were with him had sought refuge in a neighbouring barn. The chief had travelled far on that day—possibly paying a flying visit to his wife at Loch Awe—and had sunk into a deep slumber as the evening shadows fell. Contrary to his usual custom, he had unbuckled his claymore, and laid it away in a corner of the room beyond his reach when in the rude couch prepared for him. Night had sped, and the dawn was breaking as Montrose and his company silently surrounded the cottage where they knew their foe lay unconscious of the peril which menaced him. Remembering the fate which overtook their clansmen at Crianlarich on a similar occasion, the Grahams hesitated upon the threshold, and no one among them would volunteer to enter. The life of the Duke could not be imperilled, and, as second in command, the duty fell upon Gorthie. He performed his task like a hero of romance.

“The dark Syr Hew gade on before, and ane yreful man was he;
 ‘Oh, schame upon your manheidis al, and dishonour on ye be;
 Quhat fleyis ye sua that nane may daur to thraue this chalmers lok?’
 Then wi’ his iron gauntlet he that aiken dore has broke.”

So heavy was the sleep of Rob Roy that even this din did not awaken him, and Gorthie entered unmolested, and closely followed by his troopers with drawn swords and fire-arms ready for action.

The chamber was untenanted save by the chief whom they sought, who lay upon an extemporised bed of heather in one corner of the apartment, whilst the cottar, whose hospitality he shared, had sought repose at a respectful distance from him. To secure Macgregor’s claymore was the first action of

Gorthie, and Rob Roy was then rudely awakened from his slumber, to find himself surrounded by his enemies, deprived of his weapons of defence, and overpowered by numbers. To attempt an escape with all these murderous weapons pointed at him would have been madness, and he was compelled to resign himself into the hands of his foes, and to meet his fate unflinchingly. His arms were bound with a strong leathern belt, and he was led out of the cottage strongly guarded.

The encounter betwixt him and Montrose was not a pleasant one for either party. They had not met face to face for years, though each had been plotting the overthrow of the other during all their time of separation. Hitherto the odds had been all in Rob's favour, but at last the beam had turned, and the Duke had such an opportunity of revenge as he had sought for long and wearily. To his exulting taunts and insults Rob Roy deigned little reply; he would not bandy words with one whom he held in scorn, and to whom he attributed all his misfortunes. It was with an appearance of stolid indifference that he listened to his sarcasms, and noticed the glee with which Montrose ordered his men to take the road to Stirling, that their prisoner might meet with his deserts.

The party had gone but a little distance on their way when they were overtaken by the troopers whom Montrose had left behind, and the whole company set forward; a great cavalcade indeed to escort one solitary prisoner. Rob Roy was placed, still bound, upon a horse which was led between two troopers, and before and behind he was beset by such a number of armed men as made his rescue impossible. Journeying in this fashion through a country with which no other than he was better acquainted, they came at last to the Fords of Frew—the very way by which Rob Roy was to have conducted the army of Mar to the Lowlands, had not Sheriffmuir destroyed his plans. The river, though much swollen, was still fordable, and the Grahams prepared to cross it with their captive. To insure his safety, they removed the leathern belt which con-

fined his arms, set him on horseback behind one of their own men, and bound the two riders firmly together. Escape in these circumstances seemed impossible, and when the arrangements were completed Montrose led the way across the river.

The day had been dark and cloudy, and the gloaming shadows fell upon them earlier than usual. Rob Roy had been watching every opportunity to effect his escape during all their journey, but he had been so closely surrounded that no chance of success appeared. As they entered the river the horse which he and his companion rode was separated from the others, and Macgregor knew that his attempt must be made now or never. His escape was one of the most daring incidents in his eventful career, and was effected in this manner.

By a singular accident the man to whom he was bound, and in whose keeping he had been placed, was an old acquaintance. Often in former days had he assisted James Stewart when in difficulties, aiding him with advice or relieving his necessities; and it had been only under compulsion, as a tenant of Montrose, that he had now joined in the pursuit of his benefactor. The choice of such an one as the guardian of the outlaw at the most dangerous point in their journey was indiscreet; but it had been made, and Rob Roy availed himself of it. Hardly had the horse which bore them entered the water ere the chieftain began his insidious advances. He appealed to Stewart by the ties of ancient friendship, by the remembrance of "benefits forgot," by the compassion which a brave man should feel even for an adversary in distress—but his charming was in vain. However willing Stewart might be to help him, he dreaded the Duke too much to assist his captive to escape, and Macgregor, noticing the cause of his hesitancy, altered his tactics. He, too, could threaten even a deeper vengeance than Montrose would dare to inflict; and in a few earnest words he warned Stewart of the dire revenge that the wild Macgregors would take upon him and his should he be the means of causing the death of their chief. This

argument was too powerful for his keeper. Moved by fear as much as pity, he consented to suffer him to make his escape.

When disarming their captive the followers of Montrose had failed to notice that he still wore his *skene dhu*, or small dirk, concealed, in Highland fashion, within his stocking, and thus, whilst his arms were free and he was sure of no interruption from his keeper, it was easy for him to reach it, to sever the belt which bound them, and plunge from horseback into the turgid stream that brawled around. The sudden splash was heard by the troopers nearest to him, and they were not long of divining its cause, for Stewart joined as loudly in the outcry as any of them; but the wintry night had now fallen, and there was little to guide them in their pursuit. Thoroughly acquainted with the stream at this place, and as expert at swimming as at other manly exercises, Rob Roy was able to remain some time under water, and to make his way shorewards unseen by his enemies. When he rose to the surface some of the horsemen caught sight of him and dashed towards the spot where his head had appeared; but he contrived to unloose his plaid and leave it to float downwards with the stream, whilst he dived again into the water. This ruse was successful. Many a cut and thrust was made at the floating garment while its wearer was swiftly making for the river-bank, and he stood securely on the sward when his foes were busily engaged in their vain attack upon it. With his landing on the northern shore his escape became possible. There were few in that quarter who would have hesitated to shelter the chief of the Macgregors in distress, and not one who would have betrayed him.

Montrose had reached the further shore ere the tumult in the river had indicated some important incident in their progress. News of its cause soon came to his ears, and his indignation knew no bounds. That the man who had caused him so much trouble, and had kept the whole of his tenantry in fear, should have escaped from his grasp after all the toil and

trouble his capture had required was more than his patience could suffer. No sooner had Stewart landed than the Duke impetuously charged him with aiding his captive's escape, and, without waiting to hear the faltering excuse which rose to his retainer's lips, he drew his pistol from his belt, and struck the unfortunate trooper a violent blow on the temple with its butt end, which felled him to the ground. The consequences of the Duke's passionate attack were serious to his victim, for he never thoroughly rallied from its effects, and his mind was diseased during the remainder of his life. But Rob Roy was off to the hills again, and it seemed as though neither King George nor Montrose, Independent Companies nor regular troops could capture the outlaw and bring him to the gallows which they believed he so richly merited. Chagrined by his repeated failures, and especially irritated by his want of success in this elaborate expedition, the Duke of Montrose was compelled to retire from the contest, and confess himself discomfited. The pursuit of Rob Roy was now to be undertaken by another Duke, who plumed himself upon his superior power and address, and was confident of success in his hazardous undertaking.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE ESCAPE FROM LOGIERAIT.

“ On Donald Caird the doom was stern,
Craig to tether, legs to airn ;
But Donald Caird, wi’ mickle study,
Caught the gift to cheat the wuddie ;
Rings of airn, and bolts of steel,
Fell like ice from hand and heel !
Watch the sheep in fauld and glen,
Donald Caird’s come again !”—*Scott.*

Reduced once more to the position of a fugitive in the land which had given him birth, Rob Roy’s antagonism towards the Whigs was increased by their harsh treatment of him. He dared not show himself in the company of his clansmen near any of his old haunts, for the whole district was overrun with the Hanoverian soldiers who coveted the reward offered for his head. Yet by shifting frequently from place to place, by organising simultaneous raids upon different parts of Stirlingshire under trusty leaders, and by keeping himself out of the way of his adversaries, he still made his power felt throughout the lands of Montrose. Many stories are still current in the neighbourhood regarding this period of his career, and some of these we may relate, though without vouching for their verity.

Whilst lurking in this manner to escape the notice of his foes it was customary for the chief to be attended by only two of his followers, partly to assist him in the chase, and partly as a protection from assault and capture. On one occasion, while wandering in a remote quarter of Lochearnside with these two companions, he accidentally encountered a party of seven horsemen who were scouring the country in quest of him. The questions addressed to him by the troopers

were answered so evasively that their suspicions were aroused, and though they were not personally acquainted with Macgregor, the descriptions which they had received of him were sufficiently precise for them to discover that he stood before them. No sooner did Rob Roy perceive that the horsemen had discovered his identity than he endeavoured to escape from them. The place where they had met seemed to answer his purpose. The pathway had been led around a cliff which overhung Loch Earn, and whilst one side, with scanty herbage and stunted shrubbery, rose precipitously to some height above them, the other was wholly unprotected, and formed a sheer descent to the waters of the lake, which lay peacefully at the base of the hill. Whenever the chief saw that he was known he signalled to his clansmen and sprang swiftly up the hill, expecting them to follow him. Crouching amongst the broom and long grass which gave him both footing and shelter he soon placed himself beyond the reach of the horsemen; but his companions had not been so active as he, and their pursuers attacked them furiously and slew them ere they could get beyond the reach of their long cavalry swords. The death of his followers roused the chief to exasperation. Creeping back cautiously from bush to bush, he brought himself within range of his assailants, and, taking deliberate aim, he shot three of the troopers and wounded four of their horses, causing the latter in their wild fury to plunge frantically over the edge of the cliff, and to precipitate themselves into the loch below. Having thus amply avenged the death of his followers he fled stealthily away to some of his sure hiding-places among the Braes of Balquidder.

A new enemy had risen against him now in the person of the Duke of Atholl. Our readers may remember that this nobleman had refrained from joining the Jacobites under Mar, though two of his sons were leaders in the rebel army; and his caution had been repaid by his witnessing the overthrow of his own children and the loss of the Stuart cause, to which

his tardiness had largely contributed. The Jacobites had been put down, and the courageous Duke now turned his attention to the suppression of such small game as Rob Roy and his clansmen. So ardently Hanoverian had he become that he did not scruple as to the means which he took to overcome his enemies. His treatment of Rob Roy was especially treacherous, as we shall proceed to show.

Macgregor had paid a flying visit to his wife and family in their seclusion at Loch Awe, and found there a message awaiting him, requesting him to meet the Duke of Atholl at Blair Castle. Unwilling to be led into a snare with his eyes open, he caused a reply to be sent declining to place himself in the power of the Duke unless he received a safe-conduct from him, and an assurance in writing that no evil should befall him. At this time he had no special reason to distrust the Duke, and he believed that enmity could only arise between them from the difference in their political creeds. He did not know that Atholl had written to Viscount Townshend offering to capture Rob Roy, and requesting him to make preparations for his safe keeping. No doubt, therefore, crossed Rob's mind of the Duke's sincerity when he received a letter in his own hand assuring him in the most solemn manner that no harm was meant him, and stating that he wished merely to have some conversation with him upon political affairs. The anxiety of Atholl to procure an interview with him was evinced by his sending his son, Lord Edward Murray, personally to Rob Roy with letters of protection both from himself and the Government; but even this strange eagerness on his part did not awaken Macgregor's suspicions. He appointed the 3d June 1717 as the day when he would meet the Duke at his Castle of Blair, trusting to his repeated assurances of good faith.

Whenever Lord Edward brought the news of his success to his father, the latter began his preparations for the reception of the outlaw. He summoned a large number of his armed

vassals to meet at Blair, and concealed them about the castle so as not to cause special remark. He wrote again to the Secretary of State, informing him of the day upon which he would be prepared to hand over his captive to him, and stipulating for the payment of the reward which had been offered for his head. Jealous of the interference of Montrose in the matter, and determined to outshine that nobleman in this momentous affair, he succeeded in keeping his actions secret from him, and chuckled over the idea that he would not only be able to eclipse his brother Duke, but that he would secure a large bonus while doing so. And when all his arrangements were completed he waited anxiously for the coming of his victim.

True to his promise, Rob Roy appeared before the gates of Blair Castle attended only by one servant. He was admitted instantly, and was proceeding by the avenue towards the castle, when the Duke met him in person, welcomed him warmly to his house, and professed extreme pleasure at making the acquaintance of so renowned a chieftain. His effusive manner thoroughly imposed upon Rob Roy, and the courteous attentions which he paid to him threw the latter completely off his guard. He had quite lost his usual caution, therefore, when the wily Duke took him apart, and with profuse apologies besought him to lay aside his arms before entering the castle. He explained that the Duchess had been so terrified by the disturbed state of the country that she would not suffer any stranger to come armed within the castle. Duped by his persuasive tongue, Rob Roy gave up his trusty weapons, and entered the Castle of Blair arm-in-arm with the Duke, a thoroughly defenceless man.

Atholl led his unsuspecting companion into the library, and, after some talk upon indifferent subjects, he gradually turned the conversation on the Duke of Argyll and his relation to the Jacobites. This topic could not fail to revive Rob Roy's recollections of the previous attempts upon his fidelity, which

we have related, and it was the first intimation he had that this meeting at Blair Castle had been designed for a treacherous purpose. He remained silent whilst Atholl unfolded to him a similar plan for convicting Argyll of treason to those Rob had already listened to from Killearn and Ormiston, but when the Duke suggested that he might invent evidence where necessary he sprang to his feet, and indignantly rejected his dishonourable proposals. In vain did Atholl tempt him with offers of pardon and reward—far more needful to him now than when formerly made. He scornfully refused to become a party to such a villanous scheme, and denounced its proposer and all his associates in unmeasured terms.

The noise of this altercation had attracted attention, and the Duchess suddenly entered the library to discover its cause. Her presence terminated the dispute for a time, and Rob Roy was formally introduced to her by the Duke. In the course of her conversation she expressed some surprise that one like him, who lived by the sword, and was in constant peril of his life, should venture to go unarmed, and without the means of defence. The remark was simply made, yet it showed to Macgregor that he had been duped into resigning his weapons by a lying artifice, and he turned towards the Duke for an explanation. But Atholl's want of success in his tampering with the chief had convinced him that he need delay the execution of his design no longer. He boldly announced, therefore, that Rob's conduct had grown so intolerable to the country that the Government had given strict orders for his apprehension at all hazards, and that he (the Duke) had determined to detain him, and send him as a prisoner to Edinburgh. Indignant at the perfidy of one in whose power he had placed himself, Rob Roy reminded him that he carried a safe-conduct from the Government, and a written guarantee from himself, but the Duke smiled scornfully at him, and vouchsafed no reply.

"Am I then betrayed?" cried Rob, giving way to the

wrath which he had hitherto suppressed ; and has a man in your position so little honour as to break his faith and troth to gain the wretched reward offered for my destruction ? By Heaven, you shall rue this deed !”

The irate chief, regardless of the presence of the Duchess, rushed impetuously upon his enemy, and would have felled him to the ground, but the Duke nimbly avoided him, and, flying to the door of the room, he called loudly for the assistance he had prepared for this emergency. About sixty of his armed vassals entered immediately, and as Macgregor saw that it was useless to resist, he resigned himself into their hands. He soon found himself helpless, bound, and in the power of his enemies, with even less hope of escape than when captured by Montrose. The servant who had accompanied him was also seized, and he and his master were placed in close confinement in the Castle, and strictly guarded.

So elated was the Duke of Atholl at the success of his nefarious plot that he sat down at once to write letters to London and Edinburgh acquainting the authorities there with his triumph in capturing “ this desperate outlaw and undaunted robber,” as he described him. He requested the Commander-in-Chief to send a detachment to meet him at Perth, and receive his prisoner into the custody of the Government ; and meanwhile he wrote to the military governor of Perth to send forward a troop of horsemen to Dunkeld, that the safety of his captive might be secured whilst on the way southwards. On the afternoon of that eventful day he dispatched his own retainers under the command of Lord Edward to convey Macgregor and his servant to the jail of Logierait, then considered the safest prison upon their route. He set out himself that night for Dunkeld, that he might meet the men from Perth when they arrived there, and arrange for their union with his own retainers.

His joy at the capture of Rob Roy had been so great that he had quite lost his usual caution. In the first flush of his

excitement he had communicated the news to all the prominent Whig leaders in the country, and had gained, as he believed, the gratitude and applause of them all. But when he came to reflect upon the plan he had taken to place his prisoner in the hands of the Government, he regretted his precipitancy. He feared that the men whom he had summoned to his aid would claim their share of the blood-money, and to avoid this danger he determined to cancel his arrangements, and have his captive conveyed to Edinburgh by his own servants. The Perth contingent was therefore ordered back from Dunkeld by him, and he sent one of his followers to Kinross with a message to intercept the military from Edinburgh when they appeared there. By this method he hoped to reserve both the glory and reward of his exploit to himself, and thought to be thus able proudly to repeat the boast—"Alone I did it." But all these schemes miscarried.

When removed to his new prison at Logierait Rob Roy appealed to Lord Edward Murray to have his bonds removed. He reminded him that it was through faith in Lord Edward's promises and repeated assurances of protection that he had been led into the snare prepared for him, and he besought him to relax a little the rigours of his confinement, and to grant him some slight measure of liberty, since he had now so few days to spend on the earth. Ashamed, perhaps, of his share in the capture of the outlaw, Lord Edward consented, and Rob was allowed more freedom, though still closely guarded. By frequent gifts and by generous supplies of whisky he cultivated the regard of his jailers, who looked upon him as no ordinary person, and were flattered by the condescension of a chief of such renown in becoming their boon companion.

To carry out his new plan Atholl required some time to summon a sufficient number of his tenants to form an adequate guard for his prisoner; but he had no fears for the safe-keeping of Rob Roy whilst under the care of his son in so strong a prison. When three days had elapsed from the time of his

apprehension the chief again applied to Lord Edward, asking to be allowed to send a message to his wife and children by his servant to inform them of the fate that had befallen him. There seemed to be no good reason for refusing this request, and leave was granted for the purpose specified. On the day in question Macgregor had persuaded the guards to join him in a deeper carouse than usual, and ere the afternoon they were quite unfit for duty. Lord Edward was absent from the place when Rob's servant prepared to depart with his message, and the full charge of their captive fell upon these incompetent men. They were sufficiently sober, however, to keep their prisoner in sight ; but Rob Roy managed to elude their vigilance. His servant stood by the head of the horse, which was to bear him to Loch Awe, holding the reins in his hand, and waiting the last word of his chief. Rob Roy had followed him beyond the prison-wall, and was apparently engaged in close conference with him ere they should part, whilst Atholl's retainers, with inebriate solemnity, strove to keep a watchful eye upon him. Suddenly Rob snatched the reins from the hand of his clansman, vaulted on the back of the faithful horse, and dashed at headlong speed away from his prison. It was a bold stroke for life and liberty, and it proved once more successful. Ere the guards could be awakened from their drunken drowsiness Rob Roy had placed many a weary mile between him and Logierait, and was riding swiftly with loose rein towards Balquidder. He had again defeated the machinations of his enemies.

The fury of Atholl when the news of this escape was brought to him knew no bounds. He had boasted so widely of his capture, and had sneered so bitterly at Montrose for failing to keep Rob Roy when in his power, that the disgrace of this affair was much greater than it would otherwise have been. His greed had prompted him to despise the aid of those with whom he should have had to divide the reward, and he had thus over-reached himself and become the laughing-stock

of the nation. To endeavour still to retrieve his sullied honour, he issued strict orders to all his tenants throughout Perthshire to watch closely for the fugitive, and circulated an order, dated June 8th, 1717, enjoining "the apprehension of Robert Campbell, commonly called Rob Roy, who, having surrendered himself on the 3d June as prisoner at Dunkeld, was imprisoned at Logyrate, but escaped on Thursday, 6th June." Two mis-statements will be noticed in this order—Rob Roy did not "surrender himself," but was basely betrayed, and his capture was effected, not "at Dunkeld," but at Blair Castle. Did the Duke think thus to escape the odium of his deed by shifting the scene of the transaction? It mattered little, for the order produced no result whatever, and the "desperate outlaw and undaunted robber" roamed freely once more on the Braes of Balquidder.

The escape of Rob Roy put the Duke of Montrose again on the alert, since he could have little security either in his goods or person whilst he was at large. But the daring manner in which Rob had eluded his captors over and over again had won the admiration of his neighbours in Balquidder, and no one amongst them would have done aught to injure him. He grew bold, therefore, when he found himself thus supported, and dared his enemies to do their worst against him. It was at this time that he composed a long document that he called "Rob Roy's Declaration," in which he charged the treachery of his foes against them, and explained his relationship towards them. A copy of this important paper is still preserved at Buchanan House, and, as it does not appear in any other "History of Rob Roy," and affords confirmation of many of the statements which we have advanced, we shall quote it entirely. Our readers may judge from its style whether this Highland chief was the illiterate cattle-stealer that he is often described as being. We think it will compare favourably with the Ducal letters which we have already reproduced.

"ROB ROY'S DECLARATION

"To all Lovers of honour and honesty

"Honour and conscience urges me to detect the assassins of our Countrey and Countreymen, whose unbounded malice prest me to be the instrument of matchless villany by endeavouring to make me a false evidence against a person of distinction, whose greatest crime known to me was that he broke the party I was unfortunately of. This proposal was handed to me first by Graham of Killearn, from his Master, the Duke of Montrose, with the valuable offers of life and fortune, &c., which I could not entertain but with the utmost horror. Lord Ormiston, who trysted me to the bridge of Cramond, was no less solicitous on the same subject, which I modestly shifted till I gott out of his clutches, fearing his Justice would be no check on his tyranny. To make up the triumvirat in this bloody Conspiracy, His Grace the Duke of Atholl resolved to outstrip the other two, if possible, who, having coy-duk'd me into his conversation, immediately committed me to prison, which was contrary to the parole of honour given me by my Lord Edward in the Duke's name and his own, who was privy to all that pass'd betwixt us. The reason why the promise was broke to me was, because I boldly refused to bear false witness against the Duke of Argyll. It must be owned, if just providence had not helped me to escape the barbarity of the monstrous proposals, my fate had certainly been most deplorable, for I would be undoubtedly committed to some stinking dungeon, where I must choose either to rot, dye, or be damn'd. But since I cannot purchase the sweet offers of life, liberty, and treasure at their high price, I advise the triumvirate to find out one of their own kidney, who I'll engage will be a fitt tooll for any cruell or cowardly interprise. To narrate all particulars made towards this foull plot, and the persecution I suffered by the Duke of Montrose's means, before and after I submitted to the Government, would take up too much time. Were the Duke of Montrose and I left alone to debate our own private quarrell, which in my opinion ought to be done, I would shew the world how little he would signify to serve either King or Countrey. But I hereby solemnly declare what I have said in this is positive truth, and that these were the only persons

deterr'd me many times since my first submission to throw myself over again into the King's mercy; and I can prove most of it by witnesses.

“ROB ROY MCGRIGOR.

“Bawhidder, June 25 1717.”

This vindication of his own conduct by the chief could not be acceptable either to Montrose or Atholl, and the latter proposed that these two nobles should unite their forces against him, and sink all jealousies and differences, that they might triumph in so laudable an enterprise as his capture. We shall see how far they succeeded.

CHAPTER XXV.

PORTANELLAN AND STRATHYRE.

“Rage on, rage on ! Your muskets prime,
Whirl high your daggers in the air !
Your vengeance shall not find me *there*,
Ye spend an idle time.

“Rage on, rage on ! Prime fast and fire,
Plunge deep your daggers in the wind,
My heart your vengeance shall not find ;
And harmless fly your shafts of ire.”—*G. F. Armstrong.*

The coolness and mutual distrust which had existed between Atholl and Montrose for some time before this period seemed now to be forgotten, and they joined heartily together in an endeavour to put down their common foe Rob Roy. This combination was a curious one, and as its development gives some clue to the secret history of the time, and we are able to throw some light upon it, we shall explain how it arose. The advantages which we possess enable us to do so more fully than any previous historian of the period.

Atholl had been raised to the dignity of a Duke about the same time (within a few years) as Montrose and Argyll, and it was with some jealousy that he saw his compeers outstriping him both in the Senate and the field. The new title which he had received from Queen Anne bound him to support the succession which she favoured, and his hopes of attaining distinction in politics were flattered by the turn which events took at the Jacobite rebellion. The adherence of his two sons (by a first marriage) to the fortunes of James VIII. enabled him to obtain much credit by assuming the Brutus vein, and sacrificing his children to the common weal. Ere this idea had occurred to him he had wavered considerably, but the intimate knowledge of the Jacobite plots and resources which

he gained through his sons warned him that he was safer to cast in his lot rather with the Hanoverians than with the supporters of the Stuart dynasty. He decided, therefore, not only to abandon the Jacobites, but to make his own fortune sure by betraying the confidence which had been reposed in him.

Three conflicting interests, professedly in favour of King George, were thus struggling for the mastery in Scotland; but Montrose was the first to gain the ear of the King, and Atholl found it expedient to pay court to that nobleman. He won Montrose's gratitude, if not his respect, by disclosing to him such items of information as he could discover in his own home-circle, and became a spy upon his family that he might make money by their failings. His conduct towards Rob Roy has already shown his wily and insidious character, and we are now to prove that it was no assumed one.

On the 26th of July 1715, the Duke of Atholl wrote a letter to Montrose from Blair Atholl, stating that he had "received notice of the expected invasion," and detailing minutely the number of the followers whom the various Highland Jacobite leaders could command. The information which his epistle contained was utilised by Montrose, but he received neither thanks nor reward for his communication. The estrangement which thus arose between these two nobles continued during the whole time of the rebellion. The active part which his sons took in the rising prevented the Government—influenced by motives of delicacy—from assigning a prominent place to Atholl in its suppression. He was forced, therefore, to submit uncomplainingly, while both Montrose and Argyll overtopped him, and he had no choice but to assume a second place in Scottish affairs, even when under Hanoverian rule.

His coalition with Montrose against Rob Roy at this period was not difficult. The hopes of the Jacobites had been, for the time, extinguished, and nothing apparently could be made by supporting them. The raids of the Macgregors

upon his own and neighbouring lands gave him an excuse for resisting this rebellious clan; and the escape of Rob Roy from Logierait in the manner which we have described made him still more bitter against the race. Thus the two Dukes, who had both been duped by the outlaw, allied themselves together to procure his apprehension.

Atholl had written to Montrose in a spirit of braggadocio, announcing his capture of Rob Roy, and hinting that his watch upon him would be more vigilant than that of his compeer. It was not a pleasant task, therefore, for him to be compelled to write to Montrose and inform him that he also had been outwitted; but there was no way of escape from this disagreeable duty. He believed that Rob was lurking in some part of Montrose's grounds, and he could not well send men into that territory to hunt after him without obtaining the permission of the proprietor. A paction was made between the rival Dukes, whereby they bound themselves to do their utmost to bring him to punishment. This combination was an ominous one for the fugitive, since the possessions of Atholl and Montrose included the greater part of Perth and Stirlingshores, and there seemed to be little hope of escape for him whilst upon their grounds.

Despite the dangers which thus surrounded him, Rob Roy did not cease from attacking the property of his enemies, and so skilfully were his enterprises conducted that they rarely failed to increase his wealth, whilst they gratified his spirit of revenge. During the month succeeding his escape from Logierait he inflicted much injury upon the Duke of Atholl, whose gear he had hitherto respected for the sake of his two Jacobite sons. He considered that the base conduct of the Duke towards himself had cancelled all obligations to refrain from plundering his estates, and with the aid of some scattered bands of Macgregors who were distributed throughout Perthshire, he succeeded in descending upon the lands of Atholl and bearing away the rich spoils of conquest in safety. The Duke

found that the rebel chief, whose capture was to bring both glory and wealth to him, had become a very thorn in his flesh to ruin and annoy him. His lands were so widely spread that he could not defend them easily, and the reputation which the Macgregors had long borne for reckless bloodthirstiness made his retainers fear to attack them. Rarely did the reivers fail to carry off their prey, even though blood had to be shed to obtain it. Their sentiments were precisely those of the Celtic warriors who sang their own praises in the famous war-song of "Dinas Vawr," though their exploits never had the happy termination there recorded :—

" On Dyfed's richest valley,
Where herds of kine were browsing,
We made a mighty sally
To furnish our carousing.
Fierce warriors rushed to meet us ;
We met them and o'erthrew them ;
They struggled hard to beat us,
But we conquered them and slew them.

" As we drove our prize at leisure,
The King marched forth to catch us ;
His rage surpass'd all measure,
But his people could not match us.
He fled to his hall-pillars ;
And, ere our force we led off,
Some sack'd his house and cellars,
While others cut his head off."

These raids had become so vexatious to Atholl that he could no longer tamely endure them, and he appealed to Montrose to afford him assistance in putting down this pestilent rebel. In a letter (not hitherto published) dated Dunkeld, 6th August, 1717, he informed the Duke of Montrose that " he had sent 60 men after Rob Roy, whose pursuit was without result, as Rob Roy was skulking with only two or three companions," and he further asks him " to depute a trusted person to concert measures with himself for his capture." To this note Montrose replied that he would willingly send either of his kinsmen, Gorthie or Killearn, to meet the Duke, for the purpose which he suggested, but that neither of them cared to undertake a

journey to Blair-Atholl lest Rob Roy should hear of their expedition and kidnap them by the way. He would send one of them, however, to Edinburgh, where Atholl might meet him, and ask the assistance of the Government in so laudable an enterprise. Meanwhile, if the Duke would send his Chamberlain to Balquidder, something might be planned to restrain Rob Roy's depredations until effective measures could be taken against him.

No sooner did Atholl receive this letter than he wrote out an order (dated August 17th, 1717) directing his Chamberlain, Donald Stewart, "to proceed to Balquidder, and to obey any directions which he might receive from the Duke of Montrose, or any one commissioned by him." Circumstances delayed Stewart's journey for some time, however, and it was not till the 9th of September that he was ready to undertake it. On that date Atholl wrote a letter to Montrose (never before published), which was probably carried by the Chamberlain when on this important mission, and is still preserved amongst the correspondence at Buchanan House. In it the Duke of Atholl states that "at your request I have sent Donald Stewart, my Chamberlain, to Balquidder, and must ask you to depute Gorthie or Killearn to meet me at Edinburgh on Thursday or Friday." Rob Roy's foes were thus assembling against him, and serious dangers threatened him of which he knew not.

Whilst Stewart was on his way from Dunkeld to Balquidder he encountered Græme of Killearn, who had been searching all the district around Loch Earn for Rob Roy's retreat, and Atholl's Chamberlain put himself under the command of Montrose's factor. By diligently cross-questioning some of the natives they discovered that the chief had gone south to Loch Katrine, and they determined to follow him. Taking the most rapid routes known to Killearn, they soon reached the ancient haunt of the Macgregors at Portanellan, and divided their company that they might reconnoitre.

Græme and Stewart kept together, attended only by one servant, and, proceeding cautiously around the shores of the Loch, with which Killearn was but imperfectly acquainted, they stumbled upon a natural cave in the rock which promised shelter until the day should dawn. Ellen's Isle, the refuge of the Clan Gregor, lay at some distance from the shore, and they purposed, whenever the increasing light would permit, to unite their scattered band and make a descent upon the place where they believed Rob Roy was concealed. They had travelled a long and dreary road, and had been baffled at every step by contradictory statements as to the hiding-place which Rob had chosen. Their forced march had tired them out, and they lay down gladly around the rude fire which their attendant gathered for them. Rest was most needful, as much because of the night they had spent as for the day which lay before them, and it was no light duty that they had undertaken.

As they lay thus waiting for the dawn Killearn freely discussed with his new ally the plans he had formed for the capture of Rob Roy. His recollections of his last compulsory visit to that quarter were still fresh in his mind, and he dwelt with gleeful anticipation upon the sweet revenge which he would now take upon the robber who had so terrified him. Stewart had never met the outlaw in actual life, and had no personal grudge against him, but the treatment which his master, Atholl, had received at Rob's hands was sufficient excuse to him for his death. There was perfect concord, therefore, between the two companions as they debated the momentous question of when and where Rob Roy should be hanged, never a doubt crossing their minds as to his apprehension.

The Scottish proverb tersely declares that "there's mony a slip atween the craig and the wuddie," and its truth was proved on this occasion. The confederates had agreed upon their course of action, and had determined as to how they would

dispose of their victim, when they were startled by the sound of some movement in the inner recesses of the cave which they occupied. Fearing that the place had been chosen as a refuge before their entrance by some of the Macgregor clan, the three men sprang to their feet and rushed towards the spot where they had placed their weapons. Their fears were realised. By the fitful light of the fire which they had kindled they beheld the figure of a stalwart Highlander, dressed in the well-known Macgregor tartan, standing betwixt them and their arms, and brandishing his claymore in a threatening fashion. Stewart knew him not, but Killearn and his servant at one glance recognised the rebel chief, and turned and fled precipitately. Rob Roy fired one shot from his pistol merely to accelerate their retreat, and turning to Stewart he sternly bade him depart, and return no more if he wished ever to see Dunkeld again. The Chamberlain had no choice but to obey, and, somewhat crestfallen, he took his way from the presence of the man whose disgraceful death he had planned but a short time previously.

The scattered members of Killearn's party had met with little better success than their leader. In every direction they had encountered many of the Clan Gregor, armed to the teeth and ready for the fray; and as they had found it impossible to unite in numbers sufficiently strong to overthrow their antagonists, they were compelled to retire towards their preconcerted rendezvous at Aberfoyle. And when their commander and his companion joined them there, without weapons, defenceless, and dispirited, it was evident that their new expedition against Rob Roy had ended, like so many previous ones, in failure and disgrace. They returned to Buchanan House with sorrowful hearts to relate their discomfiture to the irate Duke of Montrose.

Expecting that his bloodless victory on this occasion would prompt his enemies to renew their attacks upon him, Rob Roy determined to return to his old farm upon the Braes of Bal-

quidder, and to occupy it again in defiance of them. The house of Monuchaltuarach had been destroyed in the famous Raid of Balquidder which we have already described, but with the aid of his clansmen Rob was soon able to render it habitable; nor was he long in stocking his byres with the kine of Atholl and Montrose. He did not venture yet to bring his wife and family from Loch Awe, where they still remained under the protection of Argyll, until he saw what success he should have in his former quarters. It was well for them that he did so.

Hardly had he settled at Monuchaltuarach ere Atholl planned another expedition against him. He had appealed, in company with Gorthie, to the Government at Edinburgh, and had obtained the assistance of a detachment of troopers to scour the whole district of Balquidder in search of the contumacious rebel. Intelligence had been received of his settlement in his old place, and Gorthie led the horsemen rapidly by the shores of Loch Voil to Rob Roy's farm ere he had notice of their coming. His house was surrounded and himself taken prisoner before he had time to summon his followers to his aid, and with unabated speed Gorthie fled with his troopers and their captive, in case the Macgregors should rise to intercept them and release the chief. Passing King's House, they took the road through Strathyre, intending to reach Stirling by way of Callander and Doune. Their plans, however, were speedily frustrated. They had placed their prisoner on horseback in the centre of the troop, but they had not taken the trouble to bind him, thinking that escape from their midst was impossible. But as the road wound downwards to the shores of Loch Lubnaig, it became too narrow and precipitous for them to march in other than single file, and the pathway was anything but safe for horses unaccustomed to the locality. The hill which rose above them was closely wooded and covered with furze and shrubbery, whilst the river that flows between Lochs Voil and Lubnaig was visible at the bottom of the glen, far beneath the way they were traversing. It was no easy

task for the troopers to look after the footing of their horses, and their attention was diverted for the time from their prisoner. Rob Roy was not slow to recognise his opportunity. One of the horses behind him, scared by the unwonted position in which it was placed, had grown restive, and thus delayed the portion of the troop which followed it. The troopers in front, unconscious of this interruption, were moving forward rapidly, and Macgregor thus found himself separated for a moment from his captors. To spring from his steed and dash swiftly up the hill was but the work of an instant. The horse which he had left, startled by his action, had rushed forward upon the foremost portion of the troop, whilst the horsemen in the rear could not advance so long as their restive leading-horse refused to move ; and long ere the astonished troopers could prepare to fire after him, Rob Roy was far beyond their reach. Neither horse nor horsemen could follow him up the steep hillside, and his enemies were compelled to confess that he had defeated them in the very hour of their victory.

Annoyed by these repeated proofs of the impotence of his soldiers when acting against the Highlanders upon their own ground, General Carpenter persuaded the Government to refuse to send out any more of the regular army against Rob Roy. He represented that the success with which the outlaw defied pursuit would encourage others of the disaffected chiefs to adopt similar methods of warfare to that which he followed, and thus soon set the remoter portions of the Highlands in a blaze of insurrection once more. Acting upon this advice, the Government withdrew all the assistance which they had given, and left his capture to the Dukes of Atholl and Montrose, or to those Independent Companies whom the reward offered might tempt to overcome or betray him. Montrose had grown weary of the pursuit, and the principal weight of this duty fell upon Atholl, whose indignation against Rob Roy was rapidly rising. He took measures for his apprehension, therefore, which he thought were certain of success.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE LYKE-WAKE OF ROB ROY'S MOTHER.

“ For, as he bow'd
To help him up, she laid a load
Of blows so heavy, and plac'd so well,
On t'other side, that down he fell.
'Yield, scoundrel base,' quoth she, 'or die,
Thy life is mine, and liberty !' ”—*Hudibras*.

Anxious to retrieve the credit he had lost by the repeated escapes of Rob Roy, Atholl pursued his plans for his apprehension with vigour ; but each new episode in the outlaw's career, each daring raid and critical adventure, served to make him more popular with his friends and more formidable to his foes. Many of the Highlanders of the other clans, who had been the sworn enemies of the Macgregors for generations, shared so fully their aversion to Sassenach rule that even a standing feud would not have tempted them to betray the chief, and Rob Roy thus enjoyed an immunity from danger in this quarter, whilst he was regarded as the champion of Celtic rights and privileges. The task of apprehending him became thus daily more arduous, and Atholl soon saw that his revenge, to be complete, must be speedy. But he was doomed to defeat on every hand.

The Duke assembled twenty horsemen from his estate of Glenalmond, and directed them to proceed without delay to Balquidder. The duty was not a pleasant one to them, for they feared that they would never be able to capture Rob Roy whilst in the midst of his friends, and had doubts of their ability to retain him in custody, even if fortune favoured them so far as to place him in their power. There was little enthusiasm, therefore, as they took their way southwards, and it rapidly evaporated when they came in contact with their foe.

They were traversing a dangerous pass in the Breadalbane country, which led through a narrow and rocky defile, where the moist rocks rose precipitously on each side of them to a great height, obscuring the vision beyond their outline. The contracted path which they had followed had forced them to advance in Indian file, and the bravest among them had taken the lead and urged the cavalcade to a trot, so as to escape from the dangers which an attack upon them in this situation would have entailed. They were not active enough to shun the difficulty. Ere they had reached the point of egress from the glen they were confronted by a mounted Highlander, whose garb and appearance unmistakably proclaimed him to be the chief of the Clan Gregor. Beyond him could be seen the bonnets and claymores of his followers, extending, as appeared to the contracted vision of the Atholl men, to an interminable distance, and the boldest trooper could not be ignorant of the danger which threatened them.

Rob Roy advanced at a rapid pace towards them, and, brandishing his claymore, he bade them stand and declare their business. Their faltering utterance and manifest trepidation could not be mistaken, and though he had but a few followers with him, he determined to terrify his assailants. Assuming a bold attitude he charged them with coming to the district to compass his overthrow.

"I know whom you seek," he said; "it is no other than myself, Rob Roy, the sworn foe of your weak and treacherous master, the Duke of Atholl. But know that I defy both him and you. Dare but to lay one finger upon me, and the clansmen who await my signal will sweep you from my path. Return to your lord and tell him that if he sends any more of his pigmy race here I will hang up every man of them, and leave their bodies to feed the vultures."

This bold address terrified the Glenalmond men beyond measure, and when the chief put his horn to his mouth and blew a shrill blast, which was answered by the shouts of his

scanty followers, the intruders turned and fled, to avoid the destruction that seemed imminent. A stray shot or two accelerated their speed, and Rob Roy had again won an easy victory.

This renewed defeat so irritated the Duke of Atholl that he determined, like Montrose, to lead in person a fresh expedition against the outlaw. Rob Roy was again settled at Monuchaltuarach, in Balquidder, and had grown so fearless of his enemies that he had brought all his family back to their old homestead. Atholl had therefore little doubt as to his finding him there, if he could manage to reach the locality without Macgregor's knowledge. Starting from Dunkeld with a few of his retainers, he passed through that portion of Perthshire where his own lands chiefly lay, and summoned his tenants to arm and to follow him. He thus avoided both the delay and the notoriety which would have been inevitable had he called them to a rendezvous; and he hoped to come upon Rob Roy and take him unawares. His plan so far succeeded, and he made his appearance in Balquidder at the head of a considerable band of armed followers ere Macgregor had received a single note of warning.

The chief was not at that moment in a warlike mood, and was little fitted to resist such an invasion of his territory. Sorrow and death had visited his homestead, and his aged mother, after a protracted life of trouble and anxiety, had been permitted, contrary to her own anticipations, to breathe her last in peace under her son's roof-tree. Preparations upon an extensive scale had been made for her funeral, and many of the Clan Gregor had been trysted to Balquidder to render the final tribute of honour to the mother of their chief. The Clan Campbell was also to be largely represented, as there were many ties to connect the two races. Rob's mother was herself a Campbell, one of his sisters had married Campbell of Glenfalloch, and he had chosen that clan by adoption when his own name was forbidden. It was expected, there-

fore, that the funeral would be conducted in true Highland fashion, as became the interment of one so highly respected, and that Campbells and Macgregors would unite in testifying their regard for the deceased.

But ere the invited guests had made their appearance Atholl suddenly descended upon Balquidder, and made his way at the head of his men towards Rob Roy's farm of Monuchaltuarach. Placing his followers in positions which commanded every point of egress, the Duke rode up to the door himself, and called loudly for the chief. So rapid and silent had been their march that Rob had not received the slightest intimation of it, and their attack took him wholly by surprise. Fearing the worst, he seized his trusty claymore, and appeared at the doorway in answer to the summons. One glance at the array which was there presented before him convinced him that it was vain to oppose force to force. Had the Campbells and Macgregors, who were to be his guests, arrived he might have challenged Atholl's men to the combat, but it was impossible with the few clansmen then at his command to attempt resistance. It seemed to him that his hour at last had come, but he would not submit to his fate without a struggle.

The Duke and he had not met since that memorable day at Blair Castle, when the nobleman's duplicity had conquered the chief, and Rob Roy now determined to fight him with his own weapons. Assuming an obsequious attitude, he "humbly thanked His Grace for the great honour he had done him in coming unbidden with so large a company to attend his mother's funeral. It was a proof of his friendship and condescension which he valued all the more because he had not expected it. Would His Grace be pleased to dismount, and partake of such hospitality as his house afforded?"

"No, no," said Atholl, gruffly; "I am here with no such purpose. You have so often eluded my officers that I have come myself to arrest you, and have brought these men with

me to make sure that you will not again escape from justice. You must make ready at once to go with us to Perth, where your misdeeds will meet their fitting reward."

In vain did Rob Roy protest against this harshness, and plead for permission to bury his mother ere he resigned himself into their hands. He knew that if he could detain Atholl until his own friends assembled that his rescue would be certain, but the Duke was inexorable, and would brook no delay, and Macgregor was compelled to submit, and prepare sorrowfully to accompany him.

His former experience of Rob Roy's adroitness had taught Atholl to be cautious of him, and he determined not to suffer him out of his sight until they reached their destination. Whilst Rob re-entered his home to bid farewell to his family and relatives, the Duke dismounted from his horse, and, taking his pistol from the holster, followed him and watched his movements closely. It would have been folly to have attempted an escape at that time, and there was nothing for it but to trust to fortune and to wait his opportunity. When he left the threshold of his house his weeping womenfolks accompanied him, bewailing loudly his hard fate, and denouncing the inhumanity of him who dragged him away from the performance of the last rites to his nearest relative. Atholl was not to be moved either by their abuse or entreaties, but sternly bade his men surround the outlaw, and proceed on the way to Perth.

However rugged his exterior may have been, Rob Roy had an affectionate heart beating within his bosom, and the sad circumstances in which he was placed had somewhat unhinged him. The lamentations of his wife and sisters touched him keenly, and, forgetful for the moment of the odds arrayed against him, he suddenly drew his sword, and by a few well-directed, sweeping strokes laid several of his captors low on the sward. The Duke, expecting him to fly, covered him with his holster-pistol and fired. By a fortunate mischance Rob's

foot had slipped, and he fell at the moment that the bullet passed over him. His sister, the wife of Glenfalloch, thinking that the shot had taken fatal effect, and that her brother was slain, sprang furiously with lightning speed upon the Duke, and, seizing him by the throat, bore him to the ground and held him firmly there. Rob Roy rose to his feet and stood on the defensive; then, seeing the Atholl men retiring before him, he rushed towards the place where the Duke lay prostrate beneath the deadly gripe of the lady of Glenfalloch, and after taking his sword from him bade her release him. At this moment several of the Macgregors who had been invited to the obsequies of Rob's mother appeared upon the scene. Alarmed at the sound of an affray, they clustered around the chief who wore their tartan, and when Atholl rose to his feet he found himself surrounded by a band of wild Macgregors, whose drawn claymores kept his followers at bay. The tables were turned upon him, and he was now the prisoner of the man he had apprehended.

The rough usage which he had endured had upset the Duke considerably, and he was in no fit condition to resist the onslaught of the Clan Gregor. When Rob Roy dictated terms of surrender to him he had no choice but to submit, unarmed as he was, and in the midst of a circle of infuriated caterans defending their chief from his declared enemies. Rob Roy, by a mere accident, had won the master-move of the game, and the Duke had again been defeated. With mock courtesy Rob addressed the man who had just attempted his life, assuring him that, "if he had permitted him to bury his relative in peace he would gladly have gone with him to Perth, that their differences might have been adjusted: but since the Duke had been so impolite as to seek to interrupt him in the performance of this duty, it would be impossible for him to accede to his request. And further, he informed him that he expected a large number of the Campbells and Macgregors to arrive immediately, and hinted that these clansmen would not regard

the presence of Atholl's men with much favour. He advised him, therefore, as a friend who had experienced much kindness at his hands, to call off his men, and to retire to Dunkeld, as otherwise he would not be responsible for the consequences."

What could Atholl do? He knew that many of his tenants whom he had compelled to follow him were connected with the Macgregors by birth and marriage, and he could not be sure that they would lift their hands against their own clansmen in what they would consider an unjust cause. Personally he had narrowly escaped strangulation at the hands of the virago who had attacked him, and the purpose for which he had come into that dangerous region—the apprehension of Rob Roy—was manifestly impossible. With downcast look and crestfallen air he was forced to remount his steed, place himself at the head of his troops, and retreat discomfited towards his own stronghold.

The failure of this new expedition discouraged the Duke of Atholl from any further proceedings on his own part at this time against Rob Roy, but he made strong representations to the Privy Council at Edinburgh regarding him, and they decided to take such measures for his overthrow as the law would permit. He was already proclaimed an outlaw, and any one who should murder him was declared to be free from the consequences of his deed. Still further to mark him as a desperate man, an Act was passed whereby he was expressly excluded from all hope of pardon. Death hourly stared him in the face, therefore, either at the hands of the hangman or of any bold assassin, and the power of the law could go no further. But it was a difficult thing to make the decrees of a court of law of any effect in Rob Roy's country, and, though the whole land was thus theoretically put at enmity with him, he suffered nothing from the harmless thunderings of the Council. Indeed, whilst the Hanoverians were declaring him incapable of any action, and denouncing him in unmeasured terms as a desperate rebel and worthless outcast, he was busily engaged

preparing another Jacobite revolution, and plotting the overthrow of the House of Hanover with untiring energy. The policy of the Government towards him was little calculated to win him as a supporter of George I., and the baseness and treachery of the Whig nobles had forced him into active opposition to them even in his own defence. Principally through his agency another blow was to be struck at the new dynasty, and Rob Roy was to attempt to rekindle the fire of a renovated revolution from the still smoking embers of the late Rebellion. The fate of this fresh attempt must now be related.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE BATTLE OF GLENSHIEL.

“ Oh ! our sodger lads looked braw, looked braw,
Wi' their tartans, kilts, an' a', an' a',
Wi' their bonnets an' feathers, an' glitterin' gear,
An' pibrochs sounding sweet an' clear—
Will they a' return to their ain dear glen ?
Will they a' return, our Hieland men ? ”—*Jacobite Song.*

To enable our readers to understand rightly the incident in Rob Roy's career which we are now to relate, it will be necessary for us to explain the condition and prospects of the Jacobite party at the time. The story is somewhat difficult to unravel, but we think we may be able to exhibit some of the characters in it in quite a new light, and we shall endeavour to make a very obscure event thoroughly intelligible to the reader.

When George I. ascended the throne of Great Britain he was indiscreet enough to dismiss, without reason or excuse, the most prominent members of the Government who had held power under his predecessor. Chief amongst these were Lord Bolingbroke, the eminent *litterateur*, and the Duke of Ormonde, the kinsman of Ann Boleyn, and the heir of a race which had adhered to the reigning family for centuries. The position which the versatile Lord Bolingbroke occupied at the Court of Queen Anne is well known to every student of literature, but the connection of the Duke of Ormonde with Rob Roy and the rebels of Glenshiel has not been thoroughly explained. That our readers may be able to appreciate the position of this nobleman, we must ask them patiently to consider one of the most chequered lives which that strange time developed.

The Duke of Ormonde's mother was the Lady Emilia

sau, daughter of Henry de Nassau, Lord of Auverquerque, natural son of Maurice, Prince of Orange. The Duke was connected both with the family of James II. whilst that monarch occupied the throne, and with his son-in-law, William, who succeeded him. The power of the Duke of Ormonde, Ireland especially, was very great, and he was courted by all parties when danger threatened the rule of James II. In 1685 he was made a Lord of the Bedchamber by the latter monarch, and led the Royalist troops against the King's unnatural son, the Duke of Monmouth, when he headed the senseless rebellion that terminated at Sedgemoor. But when King James fled from his kingdom, and abandoned it in the hour of danger, the Duke of Ormonde, constrained by ties more recent than those which bound him to James, was amongst the first to welcome the usurping Prince of Orange to the throne of Great Britain. To honour his relative and to secure the support of one so powerful as the Duke of Ormonde of Ireland, William bestowed upon him the Garter, and constituted him High Constable of England for his coronation. From that period he rose rapidly in favour, and distinguished himself so greatly that he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the forces by Queen Anne in 1702—a post which he held with honour up till 1713.

The Duke had thus retained the confidence and respect of three successive sovereigns of Great Britain. He had justified his Protestantism by fighting against King James at the battle of the Boyne and elsewhere in Ireland; and we could have thought that he would be the last man for George to quarrel with. Yet, on the day after the new King landed in England, intimation was given to Ormonde that his services would no longer be required, and he was forced to divest himself of that power which he had hitherto faithfully exercised in support of the Crown. In the following year he was impeached for high treason, forced to flee for safety to France, attainted as a rebel, his estates forfeited to the

Crown, and a reward of £10,000 offered for his apprehension. There was thus no course left open to him save to join the Pretender, and seek thus to restore the dynasty for whose suppression he had already fought most bravely. The cause he had espoused, however, was a hopeless one, and the change of his allegiance proved his ruin. Whilst Mar was encamped at Perth before the battle of Sheriffmuir, a brilliant French invasion, under the Duke of Ormonde, was planned; but neither men nor fleet came to join him, and he landed almost alone on Scottish soil, and retreated therefrom with difficulty. Expatriated and disgraced in this fashion, and thrown into the power of a party with whom he had little sympathy, he remained for some time in seclusion at Avignon—a disappointed man, almost despairing of success.

The Continental prelates still believed that the Jacobite cause was the cause of Romanism against Protestantism; and the countries which adhered to the older faith did their utmost for its restoration. One of the principal agents in this movement was the Cardinal Alberoni. He had attached himself to Philip of Anjou, the first Bourbon King of Spain, and could thus aid the Jacobites without prejudicing the Regent Duke of Orleans, who had counted it wise policy to renounce the Pretender. The Spanish Succession question had been a fruitful source of discord betwixt France and England, and had led these two nations into a protracted war, in which the arms of the Duke of Marlborough were almost uniformly successful. Louis XIV., disappointed in his ambition of uniting the kingdoms of France and Spain under his own rule, was forced to be content with the compromise whereby his grandson, Philip of Anjou, was permitted to retain the throne of Spain on condition of renouncing all claim to that of France. The astute Cardinal Alberoni saw that the first event which would make his master Philip popular in Southern Europe would be a religious war for the re-establishment of Romanism, and he devised an expedition against England for this purpose. The

plan he proposed, had it been crowned with success, would have seriously altered the after-history of Europe.

Judging that the severe treatment which the Duke of Ormonde had received would make him willing to join in any enterprise against the House of Hanover, the Cardinal requested the Duke to meet him at Madrid to consult upon the subject. The Earl Marischall and his brother, George Keith, were invited to attend Ormonde, and these three set forth for Madrid to concoct a new rebellion. They were met at Valladolid by messengers from the Cardinal, who communicated his plans to them, and promised the support of Spain in ships and men towards the accomplishment of the project. The Earl Marischall, to whom had been committed the ungracious task of dismissing the rebel army after the desertion of the Pretender and Mar, was now directed to call together again these dispersed warriors, and to prepare them for another attack upon the throne. The Duke of Ormonde, who had led the troops in the service of Queen Anne frequently against the Spaniards, was now to marshal a new Spanish Armada to destroy, if possible, the Protestant Succession, and lay waste the country of his birth. These are the vicissitudes of fortune which every soldier must expect.

The principal Jacobite leaders in the late rebellion had sought and found refuge in France, and Earl Marischall speedily took measures to put himself in communication with them. The Earl of Seaforth, one of the most powerful of the northern chiefs, had remained in France—as his mother, the Countess, apologetically explains in a letter to the Duke of Marlborough—“because he could not get his estate in Scotland;” and he had thus everything to expect from a revolution. Campbell of Glendaruel, the representative of the late Marquess of Breadalbane at “the Hunting of Braemar,” was not unwilling to try the fortunes of war again in support of his master’s eldest son, Lord Ormelie, who had been defrauded of his right of succession by his father, the Marquess. And

Tullibardine, who had testified his adherence to the House of Stuart by refusing the repeated offers of pardon which his father, the Duke of Atholl, had made, was ready once more to peril all for King James. It will thus be seen that these nobles might be expected to have much influence throughout Scotland—since Seaforth and the Earl Marischall could command the north-eastern district, Tullibardine had great power in the very centre of the kingdom, and Campbell might easily draw the western clans along with him. To Ormonde, who had himself suffered such deep and unmerited disgrace at the hands of George I., it would appear a most likely thing that the superseded Duke of Argyll would readily lend his aid to their project, or at least refrain from opposing it. Cadogan's severe measures in the Highlands had created a deep hatred of Hanoverian rule amongst the clansmen, and thus everything seemed to favour the proposed invasion.

By a curious coincidence the plan which Ormonde suggested was identical with that adopted by the Duke of Monmouth and the Marquis of Argyll in their ill-fated expedition of 1685, and which Ormonde himself had assisted to defeat. The Scottish nobles were to land on the west coast of Scotland, and gather together as many of the Highland clans as sympathised with the project, and whilst their actions in those wild districts, in which they were comparatively safe from interruption, attracted the attention of the Government, Ormonde was to land at the head of a Spanish army on the south of England, and march rapidly against the capital. The substratum of Jacobitism which existed in the northern and midland counties, and had been fostered especially at Oxford, would thus be excited to action, and the triumph of the cause become as certain as speedy.

The plan was well conceived, and no time was lost in executing its details. Tullibardine and Glendaruel communicated with Rob Roy, disclosing their plot to him, and urging him to prepare the Jacobite clans in his neighbourhood for

their approach. The Earl Marischall organised the northern portion of the expedition, which consisted of six companies of Spanish infantry soldiers, two thousand stand of arms, and five thousand pistols, all supplied out of the treasury of Spain, and irrespective of the armada provided for the Duke of Ormonde.

With these men and stores the Earl set sail from San Sebastian for Scotland to initiate the overthrow of the Hanoverian dynasty. Rumours of the threatened invasion had reached the Government meanwhile, and the fleet had been ordered to watch carefully all vessels approaching the coast from Spain ; but Marischall succeeded in eluding their vigilance, and after a stormy and dangerous passage he landed at Stornoway, in the Island of Lewis. This remote spot had been chosen as a rendezvous because the island belonged to the Mackenzies of Seaforth, and though the Earl had been forfeited for his share in the rising of 1715, there was little likelihood of the invaders meeting with serious opposition there. They moored their ships in the harbour of Stornoway, took possession of Seaforth Castle, and awaited the coming of their companions.

The younger Keith, after some vexatious delay, succeeded in assembling together the Jacobite leaders with whom he had consulted from the different parts of France where they had found shelter, and sailed from Havre with them in a little craft of twenty-five tons burthen, on the 19th of March, 1719. Though the Channel was closely guarded by the English fleet, so small a vessel was allowed to pass unchallenged, and the rebels joined the Spanish forces at Stornoway, after an adventurous but successful voyage.

Hardly had the chiefs met, however, ere that petty jealousy which had ruined the former rebellion became apparent amongst them. The Spanish forces had been placed expressly under the command of the Earl Marischall by Cardinal Alberoni, who had the best right to choose a leader for the men whom he had himself supplied, but Tullibardine produced a commission from King James appointing him to full control

of any invasion of Scotland in his interest. The latter document had been granted in the expectation of a Swedish expedition being sent by Charles XII. to his aid, but the death of that King had put an end to the project, and Tullibardine's commission should have expired with him. The Marquess was not to be baffled, and the Earl Marischall was forced to make a compromise, whereby he retained the command of the ships, whilst Tullibardine took control of the men. This dispute at the outset of their adventure augured ill for its success.

Once engaged in the affair, and certain of his share of glory, the Marquess of Tullibardine spared no pains to secure the triumph of his arms. We have already seen that he had associated his brother Charles with him in the rising of 1715, but that unfortunate nobleman had been captured at Preston and condemned to death, though afterwards reprieved, and doomed to perpetual banishment. The Marquess now engaged his younger brother, Lord George Murray, to support the Jacobite cause, and thus pledged him to principles which ruled all his after life. Lord George, by the direction of the Marquess, contrived to meet Rob Roy, and to arrange that he should bring as many of the Macgregors as he could muster to Kintail, there to join the Spanish forces, the Murrays, and the Mackenzies, and lead them by the most rapid routes to Inverness. The plan of the insurgents was to capture this city, then imperfectly defended, and make it the central rallying-point for the northern clans.

Rob Roy readily undertook the duty thus laid upon him, and summoned his scattered clan to meet him at the rendezvous. The call was eagerly responded to, and when Lord George Murray and Rob Roy met on the shores of Loch Alsh they found themselves at the head of a considerable body of men. Shortly after they had reached Kintail the Spanish ships, under the command of the Earl Marischall, sailed into Loch Alsh from Stornoway, and the foreign auxiliaries were

hailed by the Highlanders with enthusiasm as the liberators of their enslaved country.

There was little exultation, however, in the first council which the chiefs held after landing. They had already received intelligence that the splendid Armada that had followed them from Spain, under the charge of the Duke of Ormonde, had encountered a severe storm off Cape Finisterre, and the ships had been compelled to return dismasted and wrecked to the port whence they had sailed so gallantly. The blow was a severe one, and after due deliberation the Scottish chiefs decided not to inform the Spaniards of this disaster, but speedily to send back the Spanish ships which had brought them to Cardinal Alberoni, and thus force them to remain their allies, by depriving them of the means of returning to their native land. Marischall, who had become hopeless of the expedition, gladly adopted this proposal, since it relieved him of the only responsibility he had undertaken. It was now the task of Tullibardine to extricate the men whom he commanded from the difficulty into which they had been led.

There was no want of reckless bravery in the Marquess, but he knew perfectly well how serious was the danger which threatened. The long delay which had taken place at Stornoway whilst the leaders settled their etiquette as to precedence had enabled the Government to gain a decided advance upon them. The course of their vessels had been tracked to the far north, and the English cruisers were now following them up closely. They were at this time in the land of the Macraes, who were allied with them ; but the Frasers from Strath Affarick, the Rosses, and the Munroes were rapidly gathering around them, and a great conflict seemed imminent. They could not remain in Kintail without attempting some defensive measures.

Loch Alsh enters the mainland from Kyleakin for about eight miles almost due east, and then divides into two arms of the sea running north-east and south-west, and named

respectively Loch Ling and Loch Duich. At the point of division stands the little island of Donan, upon which the castle of Eilean Donan had been erected centuries before this time, and had long been occupied as the chief mansion of the Mackenzies, "High Chiefs of Kintail." The place had been partially destroyed by Cadogan when purging the land from treason by fire and sword, and the Earl of Seaforth, its former possessor, now offered it to Tullibardine as a post of defence. A few trifling repairs were made upon it, and it became the headquarters of the rebels for the time.

The invaders had thus been suddenly checked when they had advanced too far to recede, and they were soon made aware of the critical position which they occupied. Three English men-of-war entered Loch Alsh in pursuit of them, and speedily discovered their location. The towers of Eilean Donan, which had been formidable in the thirteenth century, offered but slight resistance to the artillery brought against them in the eighteenth; and the rebels were compelled to retreat towards Kintail. Intending still to carry out their original plan of attacking Inverness, they marched to the Pass of Glenshiel, and encamped there in a position which offered many natural military advantages. Here they found that they mustered 1500 men all told, and the recruits whom they expected were not coming to them so rapidly as they should have done. The Duke of Argyll made no motion to support them, and whilst he held back it was not likely that the Clan Campbell would join them; and yet without further aid they dared not advance. Nearly six weeks had been frittered away in foolish delays and wretched squabbling, and now their countrymen, by whom they thought they would be received enthusiastically, saw the impotence of this new invasion, and declined to mix themselves with it. The same dilatoriness and personal jealousy which had wrecked Mar's rebellion was soon to involve these invaders in similar ruin.

General Wightman, whom our readers may remember as .

distinguishing himself at Sheriffmuir, was then stationed with a small force at Inverness, and, when word was brought to him of the condition of the rebels, he determined boldly to attack them. Setting out from the Highland capital in the beginning of June, with as many regular troops as he could spare from its defence, he marched swiftly across the country towards the western coast, taking up as he went those clans who had declared for the Government and abandoned Jacobitism—the Frasers under Simon Lovat, and the clansmen and retainers of the Earl of Sutherland. When he reached the neighbourhood of the rebels' camp at Glenshiel he had 1600 men under his command.

The story of the contest between the Jacobites and Hanoverians at this place has not hitherto been related fully, in consequence of the paucity of materials at the command of Scottish historians. Through the kindness of His Grace the Duke of Marlborough we are permitted to lay before the reader a detailed plan of the battle of Glenshiel, drawn on the spot by Lieutenant John Bastide, which describes clearly not only the position of the forces, but also shows every movement in the combat. An examination of the *fac-simile* of this plan will make our account of the conflict thoroughly intelligible.*

The rebel forces consisted of the Mackenzies, under their chief, the Earl of Seaforth, and his Kintail tenants, the Macraes and Macleonnans; the Macgregors under Rob Roy; a small band of Murrays from Atholl under Lord George Murray; and foreign auxiliaries, “300 (some say 400) Spaniards,” commanded by the Earl Marischall. From Lieutenant Bastide's plan we find that Major-General Wightman's forces were composed of 146 Grenadiers, 4 Companies of Dragoons, Col. Montagu's Regiment, Col. Clayton's Regiment, a detached Battalion of Col. Harrison's, the Clan Munro, the Sutherlands, including the Frasers, and Hussel's Dutch Auxiliaries. After

* See also a paper on this Plan by the present writer in the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, December 1882.

a hasty march from Inverness the General arrived at the Pass of Glenshiel on the 10th of June 1719,

Wightman found the rebels so strongly posted that though they were inferior in numbers he hesitated to attack them. The river Shiel runs through a deep glen, formed by the Highlands of Kintail on the one side, and the lofty peak of Scur-Ouran on the other, regarding which Bastide notes that "the mountain called Skururan is the highest in Scotland, except Benevis." This statement is not absolutely correct, but the Ordnance Survey map gives its height as 3113 feet. The road from Inverness and Fort William passes by the north side of the river through the glen, and the rocks rise so precipitously that a small force might hold the Pass against excessive odds. At the western end of the Pass, where the road came close to the river side, the rebels had erected a barricade, and a short distance from it, on the rising ground to the north, they had thrown up breastworks, in a position which commanded both the plain and the pass. These were occupied by the Spaniards, and formed the rebels' centre.

The Highlanders were divided into nine Companies; seven of them extended further up Scur-Ouran to form the left wing, whilst two were posted on the south bank of the river, and became by their situation both the right wing and advance guard of the rebels.

To oppose this powerful disposition of the enemy's forces, Wightman drew up his line about twelve hundred yards as the crow flies from the Spaniards' breastworks, and extended his front in ten divisions. The Dragoons were posted on the right (north) bank of the river to form his centre, and the Regiments of Hussel, Harrison, and Montagu, supported by three Companies of Grenadiers, formed his right wing, whilst a band of Sutherlands and Frasers were placed at the extreme right. Colonel Clayton's Regiment and the Munro Highlanders formed his left wing, and were posted on the left (south) bank of the river. His whole front did not extend

r seven hundred feet, and was much more manageable in on than the scattered Companies of the rebels.

A careful study of Bastide's diagram will show that Wightman's plan of attack was to break the rebels' line by throwing his chief force against their left, to take the rebels' position by assault with his Dragoons, and to let Clayton and the Munroes disperse the rebels' right, separated it was from their main body by the river. Scottish historians agree in stating that he was unsuccessful, and had to recall his troops after three hours' ineffectual fighting; but they lead you to believe that it was with surprise that he found himself victor after an indefinite engagement. But if Bastide's plan is to be accepted, this statement cannot safely be repeated, and the following description of the order of battle is strictly according to his references.

The Hanoverian right made the first advance up the height of Scur-Ouran, under the command of Colonel Clayton, and attacked three Companies forming the enemy's extreme left at a rock where they were posted. As the rebels were somewhat isolated here, a detachment of Hussel's, and another of Munro's, broke the line by passing to the south of them, whilst the Sutherlands poured in their fire from the north. Surrounded thus on three sides, the rebels gave way, and fled up the mountain, closely pursued by their opponents, who finally reached near the summit of Scur-Ouran.

Meanwhile Clayton's Regiment and the Munroes advanced boldly against the rebels' right on the south bank of the river, and Wightman led his Dragoons and Grenadiers, with Artillery, by the road on the north bank until they were opposite the rebels' position on the other side of the river. From this spot grenades were thrown into the midst of the rebels before the Hanoverian left had reached them, and when Clayton's Regiment was divided into four platoons, attacking them from different points, they gave way, and retreated towards their breastworks by fording the river. A body of

Highlanders who had advanced to support the right were too late to be of assistance, and (probably) fell back also. Clayton's Regiment and the Munroes now occupied the post vacated by the rebels, and sent forward a detachment to storm the barricade on the river side.

The grenade mortars were next turned against the Spaniards' entrenchment, whilst a Company of thirty-five Dragoons dismounted and attacked the breastworks on foot. Alarmed by these combined movements, the Spaniards abandoned their position, and retreated up the mountains, and the main body of the Dragoons, with General Wightman at their head, advanced and took possession of the deserted fort. The baggage and the hospital had been planted in the rear of the right after its first advance, but when the entrenchment was captured they were brought forward to a place of greater security. The engagement had begun at five o'clock in the afternoon of a midsummer day, and had lasted for three hours, so that it was not easy to tell, as night overtook the combatants, to whom the victory belonged. When Wightman reckoned his losses he found that he had 21 men killed and 121 wounded, but he could form no idea of the loss on the other side.

Their loss, however, had been severe enough. Whatever the Spaniards had done, at least the Highlanders had fought bravely whilst courage could avail, and three of their leaders—Seaforth, Tullibardine, and Lord George Murray—had been borne wounded from the field. It is probable that, seeing their position to be hopeless, Marischall advised the Spaniards to surrender as prisoners of war; whilst Rob Roy counselled the Highlanders to disperse quietly to their homes ere the morning dawned. Ormonde's last attempt to overthrow the Hanoverian dynasty had proved a conspicuous failure. A party of the fugitives retired by Eilean-Donan, and destroyed all hope of further resistance by demolishing the magazine which the Spaniards had formed there.

A slight consideration of their situation when the following day broke upon them convinced the Spaniards that all hope of escape for them was vain. They had fled for refuge to one of the peaks of Scur-Ouran, and upon an eminence confronting them they saw the whole of the enemy's right wing arranged in order of battle. The natives whom they had come to aid had deserted them, their retreat by water had been effectually prevented by the return of their transports to Spain, and nothing remained for them but to surrender. Their leader, Don Alonzo de Santarem, resigned his sword to General Wightman, and 274 of his compatriots laid down their arms, and were carried to Edinburgh as prisoners of war.

Thus ended the battle of Glenshiel, the last action in the Duke of Ormonde's ill-starred expedition. If the Hanoverians had won little real glory in the contest, they had at least gained some solid advantages over the rebels, and had shown that they were not afraid to face the Highlanders even in their most secure fastnesses. The rout of the Jacobite leaders had been complete. Seaforth fled to France, and six years afterwards resigned himself and his clan to General Wade. Tullibardine and his brother, Lord George Murray, reached the Continent in safety, and, true to their political faith, took an active part under Prince Charles Edward in the Rebellion of 1745. Rob Roy alone remained in his native country, defying all efforts to apprehend him, and flitting about with vexatious ubiquity betwixt Craighrostan, Balquidder, and Glenorchay.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ROB ROY'S CHALLENGE TO MONTROSE.

“Doctor Caius.—‘You Jack’nape ; give-a dis letter to Sir Hugh : by gar, it is a challenge ; I vill cut his troat in de park.’”

—Merry Wives of Windsor.

Whilst Rob Roy was leading a kind of nomadic life, wandering from place to place so as to escape detection, the Duke of Montrose suddenly gained an advantage over him. The lease of his farm in Balquidder expired, and the Duke believed that he had now an opportunity of banishing the rebel from his vicinity. The law could be called in to aid him in this emergency, and, though Rob Roy had hitherto defied all the military forces led against him, Montrose was anxious to try his power again, thinking that the battle of Glenshiel would have weakened him considerably.

Scottish leases are usually made terminable by efflux of time, without special warning, and the landlord has power to eject a tenant who retains possession of his property after his lease has lapsed without any special process of law. The Scottish law, indeed, looks with great disfavour upon any one who seeks to resist this plain and common-sense conclusion, and the tenant who seeks to hold masterful power over subjects when his right has expired usually meets with scant mercy from those in authority. Montrose knew, therefore, that he had but to place some one in Monuchaltuarach to ensure Rob Roy's expulsion, but where was he to find the man who would undertake this dangerous task ? Killearn and Gorthie, his trusty henchmen, had been both defeated ignominiously by this daring freebooter, and they decidedly refused to encounter him again. His own retainers knew too well the

dangers which threatened any one who ventured within the Macgregor's country upon a dubious errand, and they shrank from attempting it. In these circumstances the Duke had no choice but to procure the assistance of a stranger unacquainted with the terrors which attended upon the name of Rob Roy.

To effect his purpose, he made it known throughout the purlieus of the Parliament House in Edinburgh that he was prepared to reward handsomely any courageous messenger-at-arms who would evict Rob Roy, but for some time his offer was disregarded. At last, a valiant officer of the law, tempted to recklessness by the bribe offered by the Duke, accepted his terms, and made preparations for his expedition. With an amount of self-confidence almost enviable, he professed that "with six men he would go through the Highlands, and apprehend Rob Roy, or any man of his name." He did not know what he had undertaken.

It was arranged that he should take such men as he thought suitable for his task, and set out for Balquidder secretly, so that he might arrive there at a moment when Macgregor would be unprepared for him. His first duty was to obtain possession of the farm; but he was promised a handsome reward if he captured Rob Roy himself, and brought him in custody to Stirling. Elated by the prospect of obtaining remuneration so apparently disproportionate to the work which was expected of him, the messenger set forth with his assistants, fully equipped for their undertaking.

There was only one inn at Balquidder, and the arrival of so strange a party there could not pass unnoticed. The landlord—himself a Macgregor—soon discovered their errand from their boasting, and seriously advised them to abandon their project whilst there was still a chance of escape for them. He did not neglect privily to send word to Rob Roy of the visitors he had received, and meanwhile he strove to work upon the fears of his unwelcome guests, thinking thereby to terrify them. But his efforts were unsuccessful; and though

he had taught them to regard the chief with more dread than formerly, they remained steadfast to their purpose. When they arrived at a spot near their destination the leader judged it to be expedient that he should go alone to Monuchaltuarach, that he might put Rob Roy off his guard, and his companions waited for him in a coppice not far from the house, prepared to assist him in an emergency.

Advancing boldly towards the place the messenger tapped at the door of Rob Roy's dwelling, and besought the inmates for charity to give him shelter for the night, as he had lost his way on the mountains. The door was thrown open to him instantly, and he was welcomed heartily to all the cheer which the house afforded. The chief himself—already aware of his visitor's mission—was assiduous in his attentions; and when supper was ended he invited his guest to retire with him to his own apartment, that they might talk over matters in peace. The obtrusive stranger was not unwilling to know something of the inner economy of the household, and followed Rob Roy to his chamber. Hardly had he entered it ere he noticed in the dim twilight the figure of a man hanging behind the door by a rope from the rafters, and swinging by the neck, apparently limp and lifeless. The spectacle was a startling one to the messenger, and his courage failed him.

"What is *that*?" he cried, recoiling in horror from the suspended figure.

"Oh! that," said Rob, in a tone of unconcern, and with a shrug of indifference, "that is the body of an impudent rascal of a messenger who came here yesterday to serve a summons upon me. My people have been too busy to-day to cut him down and throw out his carcase to the dogs."

These words completely upset the visitor, and despair took possession of him. Death seemed inevitable, for since such punishment had been awarded to one who merely proffered a legal deed, what enormity might not he expect who had come to evict the chief of the Clan Gregor? The very thought of

his danger bereft him of his senses, and he fell fainting upon the floor of the apartment. Rob Roy, delighted at the success of his plot, called for the assistance of some of his clansmen, and had the helpless body of the messenger carried out beneath the shade of the *stuffed figure* which had so terrified him. The Macgregors restored him to consciousness by throwing him bodily into the river at a spot where there was small chance of his drowning, and left him to scramble out of the stream as well as he could.

His comrades were not less affrighted than he had been when they saw what appeared to be the lifeless body of their leader borne out of the house and thrown savagely, without ceremony, into the water. Dreading that a similar fate would overtake them, they sought to flee from the accursed spot, but their purpose was prevented. The landlord of the inn had dogged their footsteps, and when fear prompted them to fly they were intercepted by him at the head of his own kitchen-army and a band of the Macgregors who had joined him. By his direction the intruders were seized and carried to the river, and ducked most heartily there, as their leader had been, that they might learn no more to attack a Highland chief upon his own territory.

It may easily be imagined that when these unfortunate messengers reached Stirling they did not abate the romance of their adventure in its recital. The capture of Rob Roy was placed on a level with some of the knightly deeds of prowess in days of yore, and fame and wealth awaited the hero who should succeed in apprehending him. The Commandant of the Castle at Stirling, fired by the account which the messengers gave of the cateran's insolence, determined to send a troop of his soldiers once more in pursuit of him. To avoid observation they were despatched secretly, so that they might take the chief by surprise, but they had strict orders to refrain from interfering either with the Macgregors or any clan friendly to them, and to confine their efforts solely to the

apprehension of Rob Roy. It was no easy task to keep their purpose secret from the chief, since bands of the Macgregors were scouring the whole country in search of plunder, and he soon gained intelligence of their movements. The soldiers had been observed at Callander by some of his clansmen, and warning was speedily sent to him. The Macgregors supposed that it was the intention of the Government to send another expedition against the clan, and they prepared accordingly; but the forbearance of the soldiers gave the Highlanders no excuse for an attack upon them. Many a time did they pass by ambuscades of the Macgregors unharmed, though a few shots could have made dreadful havoc amongst them; for Rob Roy had given orders to suffer them to reach Balquidder unmolested, that he might send them back to Stirling in disgrace.

When they arrived at Monuchaltuarach, where they were confident of capturing the chief, they found the place quite deserted, save by a few women and children, who professed to direct them to the spot whither Rob Roy had gone. After several days spent in marching and counter-marching through these bewildering solitudes, the spirits of the soldiers gave way. Each wayfarer whom they met had a different tale to tell, and a new route to suggest to them, and they were kept thus zig-zagging in a wild-goose chase without coming nearer their end. The country through which they had travelled was not easy to other than mountaineers, and they were compelled at last to abandon their Will-o'-the-wisp pursuit, and to shape their course towards Stirling, downcast and discomfited. Whilst they were upon their homeward way, night overtook them on the shores of Loch Earn, and they proposed to take shelter in a deserted cottage which stood near the edge of the water, strewing heather on the floor to form their couch. Anticipating no interruption, and overcome with fatigue, they soon sank into slumber.

But Rob Roy had no intention of suffering them to re

from an invasion of his land without some token of his displeasure and testimony of his power. He had been hanging in their rear with a small party of his clansmen, dogging their footsteps and watching their movements narrowly, and he decided to teach them a severe lesson. Approaching the cottage stealthily, he caused some of his men to set fire to the heather, and in a few moments the refuge which the soldiers had chosen was in a blaze. Thus rudely awakened from their sleep, a panic seized upon them, and they fled from the place for life, leaving many of their arms behind them. These were soon taken possession of by the Macgregors, and the soldiers were left almost defenceless, "at the mirk and the midnight hour," and in the midst of a country with which they were unfamiliar. One of their number was killed by the accidental discharge of a musket, and not a few had been injured in their frantic efforts to escape from the flames. They had to make their way back to Stirling, therefore, defeated and disgraced, when they had expected to reap a rich reward and cover themselves with glory.

Montrose had been again checkmated, and neither the majesty of the law nor force of arms had prevailed against Rob Roy; but Macgregor feared that the Duke would take some more powerful method of obtaining possession of his farm, and he deemed it the wisest plan for him to retire from the place. His wife had returned to the farm she had formerly occupied at Brockley, in Glenorchay, and thither he repaired, taking his goods and gear with him, and placing himself once more under the protection of the Duke of Argyll. No steps were taken at this time by Montrose to regain his farm, because he well knew that there could be no security for any tenant in it whilst Rob Roy was at large, and few men in Scotland would have cared to risk their lives in so hazardous an undertaking.

Emboldened by these signs of the Duke's impotence, Rob grew insolently humorous in his dealings with him. He knew

that Argyll would not suffer him to fall into the hands of his rival, Montrose, and it was at this time that he drew up a mock-heroic challenge to his old enemy, which he forwarded to Buchanan House. It was in these terms :—

“ ROB ROY to ain hie and mighty Prince,

JAMES, DUKE OF MONTROSE.

“ In charity to your Grace's couradge and conduct, please know, the only way to retriue both is to treat Rob Roy like himself, in appointing your place and choice of arms, that at once you may extirpate your inveterate enemy, or put a period to your punny [puny] life in falling gloriously by his hands. That impertinent criticks or flatterers may not brand me for challenging a man that's repute of a poor dastardly soul, let such know that I admit of the two great supporters of his character and the captain of his bands to joyne with him in the combate. Then sure your Grace wont have the impudence to clamour att court for multitudes to hunt me like a fox, under pretence that I am not to be found above ground. This saves your Grace and the troops any further trouble of searching ; that is, if your ambition of glory press you to embrace this unequald venture offered of Rob's head. But if your Grace's piety, prudence, and cowardice, forbids hazarding this gentlemanly expedient, then let your design of peace restore what you have robed from me by the tyranny of your present citation, otherwise your overthrow as a man is determined ; and advertise your friends never more to look for the frequent civility payed them, of sending them home without their arms only. Even their former cravings wont purchase that favour ; so your Grace by this has peace in your offer, if the sound of war be frightful, and chuse you whilk, your good friend or mortal enemy.”

This strange document is quoted by Sir Walter Scott, who proposes the theory that Rob Roy wrote it merely as a *quiz* to be “circulated among his friends to amuse them over a bottle.” This theory is founded upon the fact that the copy of the

challenge which Sir Walter saw was enclosed in the following letter, addressed to "Mr Patrick Anderson at Haig."

"Sir,—Receive the enclosed paper, qn. you are taking your bottle; it will divert yourself and comrades. I got noa news since I saw you, only qt. we had before about the Spanyards is like to continue. If I get any account about them, I'll be sure to let you hear of it, and till then I will not write any more till I have more account.—I am, Sir, your affec. Cn. [cousin] and most humble servant,

"ROB ROY.

"Argyll, 1719."

From what we have seen of the relations existing between Rob Roy and Montrose, we do not think that it is at all unlikely that the chief would forward this challenge to the Duke as it stands; whilst it is extremely improbable that he would draw up such a paper merely for the sake of perpetrating a clumsy joke at the expense of his foe amongst his comrades and intimate acquaintances. The paper seen by Sir Walter was probably a copy of the original challenge, which Rob had enclosed to his friend that he might make merry over it in his leisure hours. Nor is it necessary to suppose that Rob Roy expected the Duke of Montrose to accept the heroic challenge which he sent him. His purpose was merely to annoy his enemy, by attacking that pride which was the besetting sin of the Duke. We shall see how his little jest was received and answered.

CHAPTER XXIX.

RECONCILIATION OF MONTROSE AND ROB ROY.

"Peachum—'Tis our mutual interest, 'tis for the interest of the world, we should agree. If I said anything, brother, to the prejudice of your character, I ask pardon.'

"Lockit—'Brother Peachum, I can forgive as well as resent. Give me your hand ; suspicion does not become a friend.'"

—*The Beggars' Opera.*

Irritated by the jesting and contemptuous defiance which Rob Roy had hurled at his head, Montrose endeavoured once more to incite the Government against him. He appealed to the Privy Council to take steps at once for his capture, and pointed out that without the co-operation of the Duke of Argyll, who had extended his protection to Rob Roy, it would be vain to attempt his apprehension. He impeached Argyll before the Council with being privy to the lawless deeds of this ruthless freebooter, and accused him of sympathising with him in his politics, and abetting him in his attacks upon the property of his neighbours. He challenged his rival to prove his patriotism by delivering up the robber chief to the punishment which his deeds deserved.

Had this accusation been made against Argyll shortly after Sheriffmuir, when he had fallen into disgrace through the jealousy of Marlborough, it might have been fatally efficient to procure his overthrow. But many important events had happened in the interim. After his fall from Court favour the Duke had been tempted by more brilliant offers than had been made to any other one amongst the Scottish nobility, to induce him to desert the King who had treated him so scurvily ; but to all these advances he had turned a deaf ear. There is little doubt that he might have plunged the country into a

renewed and disastrous civil war had he joined with the rebels of Glenshiel; yet he despised the honours which success in such a field would have brought him, and adhered steadfastly to the Whigs who had renounced him. Such devotion could not escape the notice even of so ungrateful a King as George I.; and the Council, aware that the Duke had been somewhat restored to favour by the diplomacy of Walpole, declined to listen to Montrose's libel, and refused him any assistance. Argyll treated his implied charge of treason with the contempt it merited, and repaid his venomous attack with scoffing taunts and pleasantries. He denied all complicity with Rob Roy's political manœuvres, and professed that he had only sheltered him from the lawless oppression of his enemies.

"I have given him," he said, "but wood and water; the shelter of the forest, and the produce of the stream; and these he enjoys in common with the meanest *ghillie* of my clan. But my Lord of Montrose has been more generous to him than I have been. He has given him beef and meal unstintedly, and his byres and barns are at Rob Roy's command. Nay, so great is his confidence in this cateran that he suffers him to lift his rents, and furnishes him with arms and ammunition to be used against His Majesty! Who has not heard of Chapelarroch, and Rob Roy's doings with Græme of Killearn? Who does not know that the muskets that belonged to my Lord have been raised repeatedly against the King's tooops? When His Grace of Montrose explains these strange matters I shall willingly account for my dealings with Rob Roy Macgregor Campbell."

This last stroke was too much for Montrose, and he retired from the Council, finding himself the laughing-stock of his compeers. By the persuasion of his kinsmen, Killearn and Gorthie, who had both suffered severely at Rob's hands, he decided to adopt another course of conduct towards Macgregor, and to endeavour to win him by kindness since he could not compel him by force. But Rob Roy's experiences

of Whiggish treachery had been too severe for him to place implicit confidence in the advances of Montrose, and he held aloof from him for some time. At length an incident occurred which altered their relations materially.

The fame of Rob Roy, the bold brigand of the north, had spread throughout the kingdom, and a fictitious history of him had been published in London, in which the imaginative author related Gargantuan exploits and impossible adventures unparalleled save by Palmerin of England, Amadis de Gaul, or other heroes of mediæval romance, but readily credited by the King and nation, to whom Scotland was a veritable *terra incognita*. So much notice had this work received that its subject became the talk of the Court and the coffee-house. Literary taste had been gradually altering; and the severely moral hero of Otway and of Lee had given place to the "gay Lothario" of Rowe, and the doubtful characters whom Gay made famous. The glowing genius of De Foe had imparted a special charm to the dubious creatures of his fancy who revelled in open defiance of the moral law, and his "Moll Flanders" and "Captain Jack" had perverted the taste of the age to subjects quite unworthy of attention. It was at this juncture that the sensational "Life of Rob Roy" appeared to which we have alluded, and the town was captivated by its spicy but absurd stories. The King himself, unable to enjoy higher English literature, was enraptured with this nonsensical romance, and frequently appealed to the Duke of Argyll to arrange a meeting with his daring and rebellious subject. Unwilling to risk the head of one whom he had taken under his protection, the Duke evaded his request, knowing that no scruples of conscience would restrain George I. from executing vengeance upon one who had taken up arms against him. But at length circumstances seemed to favour the notion of a visit to London by Rob Roy, and Argyll made arrangements for the journey.

The jealousy and ill-feeling which had so long existed be-

twixt Montrose and Argyll had become positively irksome to the latter, and he cast about for means of reconciliation. His growing popularity with Walpole and the King made Montrose careful of offending him, and the rival Dukes met in London and patched up a peace between them. Their last dispute had been over Rob Roy, and Argyll proposed that the Highland hero should be invited to the metropolis to meet them in amicable conference upon neutral ground. His persuasions prevailed with Montrose, and the Chief of the Macgregors, who had been represented throughout London as a bloodthirsty ogre, was invited to the house of Argyll to meet his sworn enemy Montrose.

Rob Roy's acquaintance with England had not hitherto extended beyond Carlisle, whither he had frequently journeyed to dispose of his cattle; but he was not unwilling to travel further south upon the invitation and safe-conduct of his adopted patron and superior, Argyll. His meeting at the house of the latter with him and the Duke of Montrose was a notable one. Montrose had distinctly expressed his dread to Argyll that Rob Roy would attempt personal violence towards him; and his fears were only quieted by the ample assurances of protection which Argyll offered. This strange trio met in the Duke's lodgings in London, far removed from any power which either of them had, and therefore most likely to feel themselves upon an equality. Montrose had not seen Rob Roy since that memorable night when he escaped from him at the Fords of Frew, and thereby defeated his purpose; and the chief could not regard with much affection one who had repeatedly rendered him homeless, had countenanced the man who had dishonoured his homestead, and had relentlessly pursued him with murderous purpose for years past. But the mildness of Argyll brought about a reconciliation even between these enemies, and ere they parted their feud was atoned. Montrose was willing to renew the lease of Monuchaltuarach to Rob Roy upon payment of a certain sum which he thought

due to him, and Macgregor agreed to this stipulation, and all seemed well again. These three parties had kept up hitherto a kind of triangular duel betwixt themselves, but their conference at this time cleared up many of their difficulties, and taught them forbearance towards each other.

When Rob Roy was retiring from the auspicious interview in company with the Duke of Argyll, the latter made an excuse to leave him at St James's Palace, and asked him to loiter in the neighbourhood until he should rejoin him. Macgregor was dressed in his full Highland costume, and could not be ignorant that he was the centre of attraction for many elevated dignitaries who crowded the windows of the Palace, to stare at him with well-bred curiosity. He did not know, however, that one of these gazers, who had been amused by his *outré* attire, was that very King George for whose deposition he had so ardently fought. Nor was the King himself aware at that time of the importance of that Highlander who had attracted his attention. Argyll kept the secret until he knew that Rob Roy was safe beyond the Border; and endured renewed coldness on the part of the King because he had refused to deliver his enemy unto his regal vengeance.

As a testimony to the bold and manly appearance which Rob Roy still presented despite his years, we may repeat a story which is told of him as happening at this time. Whilst he was on his way home from London, he met some recruiting officers at Carlisle, who were so pleased with his exterior that they insisted upon his enlisting in the army of King George. Thinking to be rid of their importunities without unnecessarily offending them, he demanded treble the bounty which they offered. To his astonishment they complied with his request. Determined to punish them, he took the money from them, but paid no more attention to them during his stay in Carlisle. When his business there was completed, he calmly set forth upon his homeward journey, regardless of the officers' remonstrances, who found it impossible to detain him.

The King's bounty was thus utilised to defray a portion of his expenses in England.

The reconciliation effected between Montrose and Rob Roy enabled the chief to resume his old quarters at Monuchaltuarach in Balquidder, and these foemen appeared to have agreed to "let byganes be byganes." But the name of Macgregor had meanwhile become a terror throughout the Lowlands of Scotland, and it was no simple task to counteract this influence. Wherever Whig principles had been asserted, the very mention of Rob Roy was sufficient to cause a panic, and the reversal of this state of matters was not easy. To indicate the condition of that feeling with which the Macgregors were regarded in the south, we may relate an interesting episode in the history of the time, which sufficiently displays it.

The Duke of Gordon, by the failure of a wadsetter, had obtained possession of some lands in Badenoch, and had let them to Gordon of Glenbucket. A family of Macphersons, who had been tenants under the previous proprietor, objected to this new arrangement, and refused to pay rent. Glenbucket at once raised an action at law, and took measures for their eviction. The laird was confined to his bed by illness at this time, and five of the Macphersons gained access to his sick-chamber, professed friendliness towards him, and when they found they could not move him from his purpose, they attacked him with their dirks as he lay helplessly before them, and all but murdered him. This brutal outrage did them little service, as they had to flee the country to escape the vengeance of the English General, Wade, who had control of the forces in Scotland. We have alluded to this incident merely that we may quote a passage from a poem in manuscript by the Edinburgh rhymster, Pennecuick, in which the poet compares Rob Roy and his Macgregors to these dastardly assassins. We need hardly point out that there was a vast difference betwixt the Macgregors and these assailants of an impotent and bed-

fast enemy; but it suited the purpose of the Scottish Whigs to maintain an adverse feeling towards Rob Roy, and this was how they did it. Pennecuick's poem on the event is entitled, "A Curse on the Clan Macphersons, occasioned by the news of Glenbucket being murdered by them." The MS. is now in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh; and we quote from it the stanzas which refer to Rob Roy:—

" May that cursed clan up by the roots be plucked,
Whose impious hands have killed the good Glenbucket.
Villains far worse than infidel or Turk,
To slash his body with your bloody durk—
A fatal way to make his physic work !
Rob Roy and you fight 'gainst the noblest names,
The generous Gordons and the gallant Grahams.
Perpetual clouds through your black clan shall reign,
Traitors 'gainst God and rebels 'gainst your king,
Until you feel the law's extremest rigour,
And be extinguished, like the base Macgregor !"

The insult to the Macgregors conveyed in these lines was a gratuitous one. Two years before the murder of Glenbucket—that is to say, in 1722—Rob Roy, by the advice of Argyll and Montrose, had submitted himself and his clan to General Wade, to whom the command of the army in Scotland had been entrusted, and who did more towards the opening up of the Highlands by his practical engineering and road-making than Cadogan or Carpenter had done by all their burnings and slaughter. The letter of submission which Rob Roy addressed to Wade is still extant, and has given rise to much controversy. His enemies quote it as a proof of his duplicity during the whole time of the Rebellion, whilst his friends point out that it has been plainly constructed under the influence of the Duke of Argyll, who wished his *protégé* to appear as loyal to the reigning dynasty as possible, lest his own position should become dangerous. We shall express no opinion upon it, but quote the document entirely, merely reminding our readers that it was written after Rob Roy's interview with Argyll and Montrose, and at a time when he dared not oppose either

of these nobles. This will sufficiently account for its truculent tone :—

“ From Robert Campbell *alias* M'Gregor, commonly called Rob Roy, to Field-Marshal Wade, then receiving the submission of disaffected Chieftains and Clans.

“ SIR,—The great humanity with which you have constantly acted in the discharge of the trust reposed in you, and your ever having made use of the great powers with which you were vested, as the means of doing good and charitable offices to such as ye found proper objects of compassion, will, I hope, excuse my importunity in endeavouring to approve myself not absolutely unworthy of that mercy and favour which your Excellency has so generously procured from His Majesty for others in my unfortunate circumstances. I am very sensible nothing can be alledged sufficient to excuse so great a crime as I have been guilty of, that of rebellion. But I humbly beg leave to lay before your Excellency some particulars in the circumstance of my guilt, which, I hope, will extenuate it in some measure. It was my misfortune, at the time the Rebellion broke out, to be liable to legal diligence and caption, at the Duke of Montrose's instance, for debt alledged due to him. To avoid being flung into prison, as I must certainly have been had I followed my real inclinations in joining the King's troops at Stirling, I was forced to take part with the adherents of the Pretender; for the country being all in arms, it was neither safe nor indeed possible for me to stand neuter. I shall not, however, plead my being forced into that unnatural Rebellion against His Majesty, King George, if I could not at the same time assure your Excellency that I not only avoided acting offensively against His Majesty's forces upon all occasions, but, on the contrary, sent His Grace the Duke of Argyll all the intelligence I could, from time to time, of the strength and situation of the rebels; which I hope His Grace will do me the justice to acknowledge. As to the debt to the Duke of Montrose, I have discharged it to the utmost farthing. I beg your Excellency would be persuaded that, had it been in my power, as it was in my inclination, I should always have acted for the service of His Majesty, King George, and that one reason of my begging the favour of your intercession with His

Majesty for the pardon of my life, is the earnest desire I have to employ it in his service, whose goodness, justice, and humanity are so conspicuous to all mankind. I am, with all duty and respect, your Excellency's most, &c.,

“ ROBERT CAMPBELL.”

The style of this strange epistle is so different from that which Rob Roy usually adopted that it is at once apparent that both the language and the ideas have been suggested to him. It was specially unfortunate for his own reputation with posterity that he wrote this letter, since all the charges laid against him of double-dealing with the Rebels and the Whigs are founded upon his admissions in it. Let the reader compare the “ Declaration” which Rob Roy made (Chap. xxiv.) with this production, and say whether the sentiments expressed in the latter are the writer's own.

We cannot tell what effect his application had upon General Wade, nor what action was taken. It is certain, however, that he was suffered to occupy his old residence unmolested by Government troops, and under the joint patronage of Montrose and Argyll. Though reconciled to these two noblemen, he had not yet made his peace with the Duke of Atholl, and was still to have another adventure with him.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE CREAGH OF GLENQUAICH.

“Those who tried that chief to cow
Had, by my say, too much ado ;
Not brooking slight, or stern controul,
A flame impetuous was his soul,
And neither danger nor distress
Could that resistless flame suppress.”

—*Wat o' the Cleugh.*—Hogg.

It may easily be believed that the Duke of Atholl was slow in making peace with Rob Roy after the severe treatment he had received in his adventure at Balquidder ; and the new coalition betwixt Argyll and Montrose to befriend the outlaw only served to exasperate his Grace. The Murrays, of which clan Atholl was the chief, had long been noted for their boasting manner of speech ; and our readers may have learned from this narrative how well he fulfilled the traditions of his clan. Each of the three noblemen with whom Rob Roy had to deal at this time had his special weakness, and an incident which occurred at this time illustrates so well these separate idiosyncrasies that we may be pardoned for digressing to relate it.

The estate of Cultoquhey, in Perthshire, has been in the possession of the family of Maxtone for at least five centuries, and its present possessor (1883), J. Maxtone Graham, is the 13th proprietor in lineal descent from father to son during that period. At the time of which we treat (1722), the Laird was noted among his contemporaries for his fearlessness and independence. Though a kinsman by marriage of the Duke of Atholl, he was not afraid to express his opinions regarding him as well as of the other three great proprietors by which his estate was surrounded, and he framed an

addition to the Litany, which he repeated every day, and which ran in this fashion :—

“ From the craft of the Campbells,
From the pride of the Grahams,
From the ire of the Drummonds,
From the wind of the Murrays,
Good Lord, deliver us !”

That this shorthand description of these great families—the Campbells of Breadalbane, the Grahams of Montrose, the Drummonds of Perth, and the Murrays of Atholl—was not inept our narrative has already shown ; and a tradition implicating the Duke of Atholl, and proving the appositeness of Cultoquhey’s litany is worth relating, as exhibiting the character of the man with whom we are now dealing.

Upon one occasion, when Maxtone of Cultoquhey was dining with the Duke, the latter challenged his kinsman to repeat the opprobrious litany, which had become famous through the district. Atholl expected that, out of deference to his presence, Maxtone would have omitted his own name—but he was mistaken, and “ the wind of the Murrays” appeared religiously beside its denounced companions. Annoyed by the stubbornness of his guest, the Duke threatened that “ if he dared to use *his* name in such a fashion again, he would crop his ears for him.”

“ That’s wind, my Lord Duke,” replied Cultoquhey, unabashed by his superior’s vapouring.

The Duke’s repeated boasting upon the subject of Rob Roy, and his as frequent failures to accomplish his gasconading threats, had not yet taught him prudently to retire and abandon his purposes against Macgregor. He would, doubtless, blame the chief, though causelessly, for leading his third son, Lord George Murray, into the ranks of the rebels at Glenshiel, and the Duke’s impotence to avenge himself upon Rob Roy only served to make his hatred of him more intense. But at the period of our story which we have now reached an opportunity for vengeance presented itself.

Atholl occupied a portion of his estate at Glenalmond at this time as a grazing-ground for some of his immense flocks. The spot was far removed from such adequate protection as was necessary in those unsettled days, and the Duke suffered, consequently, for his temerity. It is related that in one night no less than three hundred and fifty fine wethers were "lifted" from this place and driven to some remote howff in the Highlands. The raid had been so skilfully conducted that the reivers could not be traced, and the Duke was forced, however unwillingly, to submit to this severe loss.

Some time afterwards he met one of his tenants, Menzies of Shian, at Crieff Market, and related the circumstance to him, asking his advice in the matter. Shian was no friend to Macgregor, for, though he afterwards joined the Jacobites and became famous in "the '45" as "Muckle John Menzies," he had not yet abandoned the Hanoverians; and he was incautious enough to remark to Atholl that "*Sheep* Robbie was likely ken o' the wethers, if he hadna his ain hand at them." The sneering epithet was repeated to Rob Roy, who smiled significantly when he heard it, and said, "When Shian speaks o' me again he'll maybe ca' me *Cattle* Robbie."

This prediction was soon fulfilled. Menzies awoke one morning to find that of all the numerous herd of kyloes which he had grazing betwixt Shian and Amulree not one hoof remained to him! The "creagh" had evidently been successfully planned and executed by men who were no novices in the art of cattle-lifting, for, though Menzies and his followers scoured the whole district of Glenquaich, they could find no trail to lead them towards the hiding-place of the robbers. Suspicion naturally fell upon Rob Roy, since it was thought that no other chief in the country could have managed the affair so cleverly, but proof against him was wanting, and Menzies, like Atholl, had to endure his misfortune.

It was with no good grace that the Duke of Atholl submitted to this new outrage and defiance of his authority, and,

as he had no doubt of Rob Roy's concern in the matter, he cast about for some method of bringing him within his power. He had tried both fraud and force against him before, but the latter had failed egregiously, and he resorted again to duplicity. Not wishing to break wholly either with Argyll or Montrose, he hesitated to execute with his own hands the vengeance he had vowed against Rob Roy. He had, therefore, to plot his capture, only intending to hand him over to the authorities that they might deal with him according to law.

The plotter who devises elaborate schemes, depending for their success upon a thousand circumstances, rarely succeeds; but Atholl was too much of a diplomatist to proceed otherwise than in an indirect fashion. He found that Rob Roy was in the habit of visiting a relation named Malcolm Macgregor, who rented the lands of Coynachan, in Glenalmond, from the Duke. He called upon Malcolm, professed much friendship for him, and hinted that he desired to become reconciled to Rob Roy, as Montrose and Argyll had been. "Nothing," he said, "would give me greater pleasure than to see the brave chief of the Clan Gregor once more beneath my roof; and no man in Scotland would receive a warmer reception than he."

The phrase was ambiguous, but Malcolm Macgregor was deceived by the complaisance of the Duke, and represented the matter so favourably to Rob Roy when next he met him, that even the chief was somewhat deceived by his earnestness. To please his kinsman, the Duke's tenant, rather than because he believed implicitly his statements, Rob consented to meet his old enemy, Atholl, at his Castle of Blair. The time was appointed, and intimation was sent to the Duke that on such a day Rob Roy would wait upon him.

The chief had learned wisdom in his dealings with the Duke, and was not to be beguiled into leaving himself defenceless in his hands. He dared not bring his bold clansmen along with him, but he was himself fully armed, and by his prowess might hold his own against a numerous band. His appearance before

the Castle of Blair, attended only by one servant, almost realised the poet's fanciful description :—

“ Great daring darted frae his e’e,
A braid-sword shogled at his thie,
On his left arm a targe ;
A shining spear filled his right hand,
Of stalwart make in bane and brawnd,
Of just proportions large ;
A various rainbow-coloured plaid
Owre his left spaul he threw ;
Down his braid back, frae his white head,
The silver wimplers grew.”

No sooner had he arrived at the gateway of the Castle than Atholl hastened to meet him, and welcomed him with many a fulsome compliment to Blair. But Rob Roy was not to be deceived a second time by his politeness, and he had determined not to lay aside his arms, for Prudence whispered that Atholl's Castle was like

“ Coilantogle ford,
And thou must keep thee by thy sword.”

To obviate his suspicions the Duke insisted that Macgregor should prolong his visit for a few days, and meanwhile he plied every art to charm his visitor, and to dispel any doubts of his sincerity. Rob listened to his stories, partook of his cheer, and affected a gaiety which he did not feel, but never suffered himself to be thrown off his guard. After two days spent in this unpleasant fashion, Rob Roy announced his intention of terminating his visit upon the following day. He was busy preparing for his departure, when his servant came into the room and told him, in an excited manner, that a band of twenty horsemen were waiting outside of the Castle-gate to prevent his return. The news disconcerted Rob, but his courage never faltered. He saw now that his suspicions of Atholl had been well-founded, yet he succeeded in disguising his feelings, and endured the effusive, Judas-like farewells of his host as though he had no doubt of their genuineness. The

Duke, unaware that his plot had been discovered, accompanied him to the main corridor of the Castle, and bade him "God-speed," trusting, in his own mind, that he would soon meet him again in the custody of his myrmidons.

Rob Roy mounted his steed and rode leisurely down the avenue, followed by his servant. On the way he took care to examine his holster-pistols, and to have them ready for action, and made his follower aware of the plan which he meant to pursue. Hardly had he passed beyond the gateway ere he was challenged and ordered to "stand" by the leader of a party of horsemen who sought to surround him and his retainer. He was prepared for this emergency. Drawing his claymore from its sheath and a pistol from the holster, he hurled defiance at them, and, warning them that he would resist to the uttermost, he clapped spurs to his horse's flank and dashed boldly against the opposing horsemen. From the deadly sweep of that dreaded sword his opponents instinctively shrank, for they knew its merciless power; and thus, without shedding one drop of blood, Rob Roy found that he had cleft a way for himself and his comrade through the midst of the serried ranks of his foes. He had calculated rightly that their orders were to capture him alive, and in no case to fire upon him; and ere they had recovered from the stupor into which his bold action had thrown them, he was spurring swiftly towards Perth, doubling upon his pursuers, yet reaching that city by side-paths ere they had come near it. The report which he heard circulated there that "Rob Roy was captured at last," was listened to with grim satisfaction by himself and his servant. He could have told a different tale; but the manifest exultation of the burghers warned him to flee to his own country, and take refuge once more in the land of the West. He did not feel himself safe until he had reached Balquidder, where the joint protection of Montrose and Argyll was extended over him. This was the last encounter which he had with the Duke of Atholl, for in the following year (1724) that

nobleman died, leaving two families divided from each other politically, each one doomed in after years to lift the sword against his brother. With their disputes, however, Rob Roy was done when he made his final daring escape from Blair Castle.

Whilst he enjoyed the patronage of the Dukes of Argyll and Montrose, Rob Roy did not need to care greatly for Atholl's enmity, and he studied to secure the approbation of his protectors by striving to lead a peaceful life. His existence had been a turbulent one, as we have seen, but advancing age, with all its dreaded symptoms, rapidly approached upon him, and his failing strength could not have accomplished the daring deeds of his younger days, even had his spirit been exuberant enough to have suggested them. He had reached that period which the poet describes in sorrowful measure:—

“My lusts they do me leave,
My fancies all are fled,
And tract of time begins to weave
Grey hairs upon my head.

For Age, with stealing steps,
Hath clawed me with his crutch,
And lusty Life away she leaps
As there had been none such.

.

The wrinkles in my brow,
The furrows in my face,
Say, limping Age will lodge him now,
Where Youth must give him place.”

It was probably at this time, when he felt the evening shadows of life closing around him, that he thought fit to change his religion. Hitherto he had stedfastly adhered to the Presbyterian form of worship, and maintained the creed in whose faith he had been reared, though fighting for the restoration of a Roman Catholic king. The stern tenets of Presbyterianism would afford little comfort to one like him, when he came to look back upon his life and its manifold

transgressions. But "the [Romish] Church," writes Dryden, "is an indulgent mother;" and though Rob Roy would "have rare work, we fear, at his first confession," he would be received more tenderly there than by the "Presbyterian True-blues," upon whom he had bestowed most un-"Apostolic blows and knocks." Many reasons have been given for his conversion, some writers asserting that it was out of deference to the Duke of Perth that he changed, and others maintaining that it was to secure an absolution which he could not otherwise obtain. Upon such a subject it is vain to speculate, but it is interesting to notice, as an indication of his wayward character, that he was a Presbyterian when he fought for the Catholic King James, and a Romanist when he renounced him for the Protestant King George. His adhesion to the older faith was given first at Drummond Castle, the seat of the attainted Duke of Perth, and his confession made to an aged priest called Alexander Drummond, who resided there. Rob Roy's own account of his important interview with him is highly suggestive. He relates "that the old man frequently groaned and crossed himself as the darker deeds were related, and laid a heavy penance upon him for his sins." "But for all that," Rob was wont to say, "it was a convenient religion, which, for a little money, could put asleep the conscience, and clear the soul from sin."

During the remainder of his life he abjured the rough style of existence to which he had been accustomed, and did his best to settle down quietly upon his farm of Monuchaltuarach. He was not suffered, however, to remain wholly inactive, and some of the incidents in the closing years of his life are as interesting as many of his bolder and more dashing achievements.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DEATH OF ROB ROY.

“The harbinger of Death
To me I see him ride;
The cough, the cold, the gasping breath
Doth bid me to provide
A pickaxe and a spade,
And eke a winding-sheet,
A house of clay for to be made
For such a guest most meet.”

A Dytte of Death—LORD VAUX.

The hill-farm of Invernenty, near Balquidder, had long been held by a family of Macgregors nearly related to Rob Roy, but their wandering and unsettled life during the Revolution and for years afterwards prevented them from retaining possession of it. When the Clan submitted to General Wade, however, they returned to their old location, intending to resume their peaceful occupations, and to become industrious members of society. Their plans were rudely thwarted, for they found the farm which they had left that they might fight for “the King ower the water” had been seized by a family of Maclarens, who refused to render back their property. Their first thought was to appeal to their kinsman, Rob Roy, and to ask his aid in adjusting their differences.

Though Rob had now reached a green old age, and might well have pleaded that his time of war was o’er, he was not the man to allow any of his clansmen to suffer injury whilst he could redress it, and he promptly called out his Macgregors that they might evict the intruding Maclarens from Invernenty. This summons was speedily responded to, and he soon mustered a considerable number of his clansmen at their ancient rendezvous, the Kirkton of Balquidder.

Rumours of this warlike demonstration had meanwhile reached the Maclarens, and as they were not strong enough to defend themselves against this threatened invasion they were forced to look around for aid. The Stewarts of Appin were then the most powerful clan in that quarter, and claimed superiority over this very farm of Invernenty which was in dispute, and, as the Maclarens were connected by family ties with the Stewarts, their appeal for protection was favourably entertained. For centuries the Stewarts of Appin had been the foes of the rapidly spreading Clan Campbell, but their power was gradually waning before the resistless advance of Argyll, and the chief of the Stewarts was not unwilling to try conclusions with Rob Roy at this time, since he had been reputed one of the most formidable adherents of the Campbells. Deeming that age would have abated Rob's vigour, even if experience had not taught him prudence, he determined to support the Maclarens in their possession of Invernenty, and to defy the Macgregors to battle.

His anticipations were verified. The Stewarts mustered in great force to oppose the Macgregors, and Rob Roy soon found that to resist them in the open field would be a hopeless task. The fire of youth no longer impelled him to daring feats of arms, and, though his first impulse had been to oust the Maclarens by force from the farm which belonged by prescriptive right to his own clansmen, he saw upon reflection that such a conflict as the Stewarts threatened would embroil him in endless bickerings, and possibly provoke the interference of the Government when he was no longer able to resist. The parties met at the Kirkton of Balquidder, but ere they came to blows Rob Roy stepped forward to parley with the chief of Appin. He pointed out that the clans had hitherto been friendly, having both fought for the King, *de jure*, and both submitted to the King, *de facto*. Nothing could be gained by either party, he averred, by persisting in a dispute upon so trifling a question as was involved in the possession of the

farm of Invernenty ; and, rather than prejudice the peace of the realm or peril the good-feeling hitherto existing betwixt them, he was willing to forego any claim which he had upon it. Though conscious of his superiority in numbers, Appin was not unwilling to escape the risk of a conflict with the wild Macgregors, and an amicable arrangement was made whereby the Maclarens were settled in the disputed property under the protection of the Stewarts. The clans who had thus met prepared for "war to the knife" speedily fraternised as though they had never entertained bloodthirsty designs against each other.

Fearing, perhaps, that his policy would not commend itself to his clansmen, since it apparently resigned what they believed to be a right without one struggle to support it, Rob Roy adopted a bold expedient for putting them in good humour with him. He advanced towards Stewart of Appin, and, professing that "it was a pity so many brave Highlanders should be deprived of their diversion," he proposed to engage himself in single combat with any one in all the Stewart band. By this method he thought he would vindicate his own courage, and prove to his clansmen that he was still fearless enough to be the leader of "the Children of the Mist." His reputation as one of the best swordsmen of his time made several of the Stewarts anxious to try conclusions with him in a duel for honour only, and it was at length arranged that Alastair Stewart of Invernahyle, the brother-in-law of Appin, should support the credit of his clan. The duellists stepped into the open space between the opposing forces, and addressed themselves to this strange and romantic combat.

Invernahyle was much younger than his opponent, and had he been dealing with a less skilful swordsman victory would have been easy to him. But the vigour which Rob Roy no longer had at command was almost compensated for by that skill and dexterity which practice and experience had

bestowed. Each fiery blow and thrust which Stewart aimed was countered and parried by his cooler antagonist with provoking indifference. At last, after the contest had been long maintained, an unfortunate slip on the part of Rob Roy enabled Invernahyle to get within his guard and to wound Macgregor slightly in the arm. The laws of the ancient duello were precise. The seers had repeatedly declared that in times of feud—

“ Who spills the foremost foeman’s life,
His party conquers in the strife,”

and in mock combat the first to draw blood was ever pronounced victor. Rob Roy had therefore to drop his sword-point and acknowledge himself defeated, possibly muttering Sir Andrew Aguecheek’s sentiment—“ An I had known he was so cunning of fence, I had seen him damned ere I fought him.” The antagonists parted, however, with mutual compliments, Stewart acknowledging that but for his youthful vigour the aged chief would have overmatched him at his own weapon. All parties having vindicated in this primitive and Homeric fashion their willingness to fight, retired from the Kirkton of Balquidder, whose peaceful hamlet might have easily become a scene of reckless carnage but for the diplomacy of Rob Roy.

Though he endured this defeat with a good grace, there is little doubt that its influence had a demoralising effect upon Macgregor. It came upon him as a proof that his energy was fast decaying; and it was only the first of a succession of similar defeats. Some time afterwards he happened to be in company with a few of the neighbouring lairds in the inn of Arnprior, and in the course of their conviviality a dispute arose betwixt him and the young laird of Boquhan. The latter had brought no sword with him, but, fired with wine and regardless of his actions, he challenged the chief to battle though armed only with a rusty rapier which he had found in a corner of the room. Even with this firebrand, whom he would

have swept indignantly from his path in earlier days, Rob Roy dared not cross swords, and he was forced to submit to insults which would have been dearly avenged a few years before. Upon another occasion he fought with Stewart of Ardsheal, and having been slightly wounded he threw down his claymore despairingly, vowing never more to take it up again. To this resolution he faithfully adhered, and during the few years which he had to spend upon the earth he devoted himself exclusively to peaceful pursuits. The broadsword which had been his faithful guardian and companion for so many years was now to be laid aside by him for ever.

We have made minute inquiries as to the fate of this historic weapon, but have not been able to discover what ultimately became of it. We can trace its history for a century after our hero's death, but its place of concealment during the last fifty years is quite unknown to us. The latest account which we have of it is to be found in the *Inverness Courier* of September 4, 1833, where it is stated that "the favourite claymore of this celebrated outlaw (Rob Roy) has been presented by Mr Ryder, of the Aberdeen Theatre, to Mr Alexander Fraser, the young laird of Torbreck. The present is accompanied with the following certificate :—'This was the favourite claymore of Rob Roy. It was presented by him to his particular friend and near relative, Mr Campbell of Glenlyon, and remained in that family until Francis Gordon Campbell of Troup succeeded to the title and estates of Glenlyon.'" Beyond this statement we can find no clue.

The shadows of life's evening were now gathering rapidly around Rob Roy, and his turbulent career was drawing to its close. He had left his farm of Monuchaltuarach to the care of his two eldest sons, and had retired to the house of Inverlochlarigbeg in Balquidder to end his days in peace. It is said, though we know not on what authority, that, as he felt his end approaching, he frequently lamented over the errors of his early days, and mourned that the rashness and intem-

perance of his youth had spread suffering and death amongst his fellow-countrymen.

"His wife," writes one author, "laughed at these scruples of conscience, and exhorted him to die like a man, as he had lived. In reply he rebuked her for her violent passions, and the counsels she had given him. 'You have put strife,' he said, 'betwixt me and the best men in the country, and now you would place enmity between me and my God.'"

Though thus giving way in his retirement to what he would have considered as weakness at an earlier time, he did not suffer his penitence for past transgressions to be visible to the outside world. His indomitable courage and self-command are well illustrated by his bearing upon his death-bed, and though the tale has been often told already we must repeat it, since it is the

"last scene of all
Which ends this strange, eventful history."

One day whilst confined to the house by those infirmities which ultimately proved fatal, Rob Roy received a friendly visit from his old enemy, Maclaren of Invernenty—the man whom Stewart of Appin had placed over his head. Believing—whether rightly or wrongly we cannot tell—that Maclaren had come to gloat over his weakness and triumph in his impotence, Rob Roy at first refused to see him in his sick chamber, but afterwards consented to meet him in a fashion which Maclaren did not anticipate. Though prostrated by disease and infirmity, Rob Roy insisted that his sons and attendants should raise him from his bed, clothe him in martial array as for the battlefield, and place him in his chair, with his claymore and pistols beside him, as became a Highland chief; and in this guise he received his visitor, and chatted gaily with him during his stay. But the exertion had been too great for him; it was the last brilliant flicker of an expiring taper, whose very glare betokened its extinction. Hardly had Maclaren retired from his presence ere the excite-

ment which had maintained Rob Roy gave way, and he sank back exhausted by the revulsion which followed.

"Now all is over," he cried. "Let the piper play *Cha teil mi tulidh* (I will never return), for my time has come."

His last commands were obeyed. The pipers raised those plaintive strains which even yet awaken tender memories of other times in every Celtic heart, and ere the notes had wholly died upon the air Rob Roy's spirit had fled from its earthly tabernacle! Surely that was a fitting close to a life so stormy as his—to die in his war-graith, with his trusty sword in his hand, lulled to the eternal sleep of death by the music which had so often fallen upon his ears! Who may tell what thoughts of other days flashed through the mind of the expiring hero as his eye waxed dim in that gloomy chamber, and he relaxed his grasp upon the sword never more to be wielded by him? He had long outlived his time, and had seen the friends of his youth cut down before him—"Like a tree they grew on the hills, and they have fallen like the oak of the desert, when it lies across a stream, and withers in the wind of the mountains. . . . Terrible were their forms in battle, but calm was Ryno in the days of peace. He was like the bow of the shower seen far distant on the stream, when the sun is setting on Moro, and silence on the hill of deer. Rest, O Ryno, on Lena! We too shall be no more, for the warrior one day must fall."

Thus terminated the career of one who revived, almost within our own time, the romance of mediæval chivalry. The closing scene of his life has been frequently sung, but we may be pardoned for completing our history of Rob Roy with a spirited description of the final tableau from the pen of one who can well express the romantic feelings which such an incident excites :—

"Night drew its dark mantle o'er gloomy Balquidder,
Low rolled the mist clouds from the mountain's dim crest,
And wild wailed the wind o'er the dew-weeping heather,
In tones of despair for the hero's unrest ;

The dank dew of death on Macgregor was falling,
 Black-robed were his eyes in his soul's fading fires,
 The grey wraith of doom to its embers was calling,
 And weirdly trooped round him the shades of his sires.

On to the heroes' home
 Proudly they all have come,
 To bear with loved honour the soul of the brave,
 'Our watch we are keeping,
 'Tis Macgregor's last sleeping.'
 They whisper, and o'er him his guerdon they wave.

" 'Who comes !' spoke Macgregor ; ' that voice is a foeman's,
 My death-sharpened ear knows an enemy's tread.
 Away, ye gay phantoms ! ye death-telling omens !
 Bring, bring me my claymore, wrap round me my plaid.
 What ! Rob Roy defenceless ? Ha, ha ! it shall never
 Be said that a foe found me powerless to smite ;
 A thousand deaths' terrors may rend me for ever,
 Ere Rob Roy Macgregor shall fail in his might.
 Strength to my arm returns,
 Hate in my bosom burns,
 Up ! up ! bounds my soul like a torrent in wrath :
 Royston shall ring again,
 There are my Highland men,
 Thro' foemen a hundred we'll cleave a red path !'

As falls the green pine 'neath the blast from the mountain ;
 As wild rolls the arrow-pierced deer on the heath ;
 As fast is the flow of a lightning-struck fountain,
 So fell the Macgregor fierce battling with death.
 'Who doubts me ?' he whispered, 'unconquered I m dying,
 My bed is the heather I've trod in my pride ;
 My tartan unsullied around me is lying,
 My sword's in my hand, and a friend's by my side !
 Farewell ! I near the verge,
 Play, play my Highland dirge !
 'Twill wing my last breath to the soul-lighted shore.
 Hush ! wail-notes are pouring,
 See ! heroes adoring
 The strain slowly telling Macgregor's no more !'

Afar on the tempest the last note was ringing,
 A pain-shivered blast from the trumpets of awe,
 While mountains their requiem echoes were flinging
 Around the cold couch of the vanquished outlaw ;
 Meet music for monarchs reposing in glory ;
 Meet welcome for hero-souls, dauntless and brave,
 And loved Caledonia will cherish his story
 As long as the heather-bells bloom o'er his grave.
 Or, in each Highland vale,
 Nodding to Freedom's gale,

Unweathered by Winter's enslaving embrace,
 They, in their dewy shrouds,
 Battle all tempest-clouds,
 Strong-nursed on the dust of a Time-storied race !" *

Considerable mystery has hitherto surrounded the death of Rob Roy, since historians differ very much as to the precise date of his decease. Sir Walter Scott writes—"The time of his death is not known with certainty, but he is generally said to have survived 1738, and to have died an aged man." Dr Macleay confidently quotes 1735 as the date when he "calmly met his death," but his conjecture is also incorrect. The *Caledonian Mercury* for January 9th, 1735, contains the following announcement, which should finally settle this controversy :—

"On Saturday was se'nnight [Decr. 28, 1734], died at Balquidder, in Perthshire, the famous Highland partisan, *Rob Roy*."

We have seen that the year of his birth has not yet been discovered ; but taking the notion which we have suggested, that it was probably about 1660, we find that he had reached the patriarchal age of seventy-four ere he departed. He was buried at Balquidder, and his grave is still pointed out to the curious tourist, one of the ancient Sculptured Stones of Scotland having been placed upon its site. It has been customary to ascribe the rudely chiselled sword upon this stone to the enthusiastic devotion of some of Rob Roy's followers, but it is almost certain that it was the pious work of one who lived many centuries before our hero was born. Doubtless it had stood as a landmark in the Kirkton of Balquidder to indicate the spot where some mighty warrior had been buried in pre-historic times ; and it serves now to link together in a special fashion the chivalry of former ages and that of these latter days.

We have thus brought our History of Rob Roy to its ter-

* *Heather Bells.* By William Allan, Sunderland.

mination, and have striven to show the man fairly and truthfully as he was, and we need not pause, therefore, to give any elaborate summary of his character. His memory has suffered as much, perhaps, from his inconsiderate defenders as from his unscrupulous assailants; but we think that the facts of his career which we have laid before the reader should enable him easily to form an opinion on the matter. We have at least shown from the letters we have printed that he was not the ignorant cateran some recent biographers have described, but that he could pen an epistle in as clerkly a fashion as any of the Scottish nobility. As a proof that he was not ignorant of literature, we may mention that we lately had the privilege of inspecting the copy of Bishop Keith's "History," which belonged at one time to Patrick Fraser Tytler, the historian, and found that the latter had crossed the name of Rob Roy as noteworthy amongst the noble and reverend names in the list of subscribers. To arrive at the complete truth as to some of the dubious incidents in his life is now hardly possible, but we are inclined to believe that the reader who has followed his life thus far will come to the same conclusion as did old Andrew Fairservice, that "there are mony things ower bad for blessing, and ower guid for banning, like Rob Roy."



A P P E N D I X.

ROB ROY AND THE LAIRD OF WESTERTON.

THE particulars of the following incident, which has not hitherto been published, have been kindly communicated by General Sir James Edward Alexander of Westerton, Bridge of Allan, Kt.C.B., a lineal descendant of the Laird of Westerton concerned in the affair.

Whilst Rob Roy was collecting his "black-mail" dues in the district of Menteith, he came to the estate of Westerton, near Stirling, expecting to find the Laird as complaisant as his neighbours. But Laird Henderson had grown weary of the imposition, and had determined to resist the assessment, and trust to the law for protection. He refused to satisfy the demands of the chief, and thereby made Rob Roy his enemy. While the Laird was walking in front of his house he was suddenly surrounded by a band of wild Macgregors, with Rob Roy at their head, who laid hold upon him, and carried him away with them, as they did Græme of Killearn, to exact a ransom. Shaping their course towards Balquidder, they passed through Callander, but night overtook them when they had reached Kilmahog, near the Pass of Leny. As they deemed themselves secure from pursuit in this secluded retreat, they decided to pass the night there, and made preparations for enjoying themselves in truly Highland fashion. They took up their quarters in a barn in the vicinity, and spent the night with mirth, music, and revelry. The *usquebagh* circulated freely; and as they danced they sang an improvised

refrain which long dwelt in the recollection of the captive Laird of Westerton, and which ran in this rude fashion :—

“ Noo we’ve come to Kilmahog,
Noo we’ve come to Kilmahog,
We’ll tak’ a pint aff the carle,
We’ll tak’ a pint, tak’ a pint aff the carle.”

Overpowered at length by their festivity, they lay down to sleep, that they might be able for an early start in the morning. The Laird was placed on the straw between two Highlanders, who slept with drawn dirks in their hands, and his shoes were removed out of his reach. Escape seemed impossible to him ; but as the night wore on his “strange bedfellows,” affected by alcoholic fumes, dropped into a profound slumber. Mr Henderson, however, was wide-awake, and, moving with extreme caution, he succeeded in extricating himself from his dangerous position, and, securing his shoes, he stepped lightly yet warily into the outer air. He knew that one false movement would be death to him, and that his liberty now depended upon his speed. Never before had he covered the ground betwixt Kilmahog and Westerton at such a rapid rate, and he reached his home at length in safety, to the delight of his afflicted family. A message to Stirling Castle procured assistance, but Rob Roy did not venture to repeat his visit.

Sir James Alexander adds :—“ I have been long anxious to have a proper headstone placed at Balquidder at Rob Roy’s grave. There is an old stone there with strange figures on it, but it is a mere make-shift, and is centuries old. A stout square stone, with a bonnet carved at the top, or other Highland emblem, would be an appropriate memorial of this historical character, with an inscription reciting the dates of his birth and death.”



SCULPTURED STONE ON ROB ROY'S GRAVE AT BALQUIDDER.

RELICS OF ROB ROY.

ALTHOUGH we have failed to discover the present location of Rob Roy's claymore (see Chapter XXXI.), several other relics are still in existence, which have lately been brought to our notice. Lieut.-General Rintoul, of London, is now in possession of a duly certificated flint-lock pistol which belonged to the Chief, and which is thus described in a communication kindly sent us by its possessor :—"The pistol is one of those made all of steel, the butt flat on both sides and 'ram's-headed'—just the old Highland pattern as made by Murdoch, at Doune, the beginning of last century and end of preceding one. It is roughly made, quite plain, and free from the beautiful engraving and inlaying with which some I have, by Murdoch and Campbell, are covered. It is 12 inches in length from butt to muzzle." The following certificate was received with it :—

"INVERNAID, LOCH LOMOND,

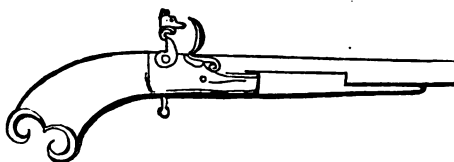
June 21st, 1869.

"Jean Campbell, widow of Donald Campbell, Balquidder, has this day sold to Mr D. Wright, Aberdeen, a pistol which has been for many years in the family, and which was always carefully preserved by her late husband, as having been given to his grandfather by Rob Roy M'Gregor Campbell of Glengyle.

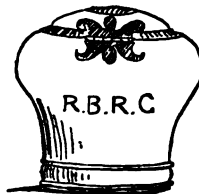
(Signed) "JEAN CAMPBELL."

The certificate was endorsed by Mr Wright when the weapon was purchased by General Rintoul. It may be noted that Rob

Roy is here described as “of Glengyle,” but this, we suppose, is a mere slip of the pen. We subjoin sketch of the pistol.



R. P. Grey, Esq. of Coles, Buntingford, Herts, to whom we are indebted for the sketch of the picture forming the frontispiece of this volume, has sent us sketch and description of Rob Roy's snuff-box, which is in his possession. Its appearance may be understood from our engraving. It is made of dark-stained ivory, with silver mountings, hinged as initials “R.B.R.G.”—on one side, and the on the other. A silver lid has the initials Gregor,” and on the “A.M.F.” have been M’Finnon.” Inside of



shown in drawing, with Rob Roy Macgregor—words “*Crom a boo*” plate on the top of the “F.G.,” for “Finnon silver rim the letters engraved for “Andrew the box there is a label

“This box was bought at the sale of Finn. Macgregor, of Doune Place, Aberdeen, a descendant of Rb. Roy Macgregor, by whom it was much prized as a relic of the once famous outlaw. The words ‘Crom a Boo’ (I will burn) during the reign of George III. were declared High Treason if used in Gr. Britain.

“The letters R.B.R.G. attest Rob Roy Macgregor.

Glasgow, July 10, 1820.

Witnesses,

R. T. MACSWAINE.

JA. COLERIDGE.”

The box came into Mr Grey's possession in 1878

In one of his letters to us Mr Grey writes :—

“I may mention that a year or two ago Rob Roy's pocket-knife handle was found near his cottage at Balquidder, a few inches deep in the heather or moss. The Duke of Argyll has now got it. The initials on the handle are ‘R.M.G.C.,’ roughly cut, for ‘Robert

Macgregor Campbell.' Rob Roy's gun is preserved at Abbotsford, and is described by Sir Walter Scott in his Introduction to 'Rob Roy.'"

Several holograph letters from Rob Roy are in possession of John Graham, Esq., of Whitecross. From one of these, which was published in the "Red Book of Menteith," we have engraved the accompanying fac-simile, believing that it will be of interest to our readers :—

thp 4 acct
my Belins wyow bedfellow Rob Roy
the yerbasance of your's of formerly
Rob Roy
Rob Campbell

my service to your bedfellow, safe yt I am

At Portnellan, 24th }
 June 1711. }

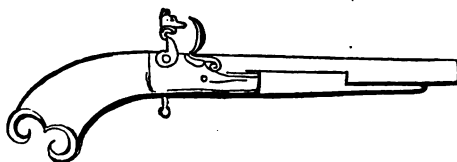
Yours as formerly
 Ro : CAMPBELL."

"this is all wt.

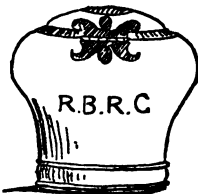
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*thp & acc^t
my Belies by y^r Bedfellow Rob Roy
the y^r husband, & y^r of formerly
Jo: Campbell
R. Campbell*

"this is all wt.

my service to your bedfellow, safe yt I am

At Portnellan, 24th }
June 1711.

Yours as formerly
Ro : CAMPBELL."

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